

TOC H UNDER WEIGH

BY

P. W. MONIE.



*"It makes all the difference whether we
have set out on a cruise or on a voyage."*

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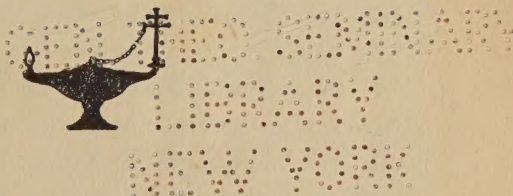
PRESENTED BY

The Rev. Wm. C. Hicks

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NOTE.

The little papers which follow were written from time to time for the Toc H Journal from January to December 1926. They are reprinted practically as they first appeared. If time had permitted, I should have preferred to rewrite most of them. But those for whom they were written will, I think, take them as they are for all they claim to be—an attempt to “provoke” members of Toc H to think harder about it.

In case this booklet should fall into the hands of anyone who has not heard of the Founder Padre of Toc H, once Chaplain of Talbot House, Poperinghe and Ypres, I had better say that Tubby is described more formally in the Clergy List as the Reverend Philip Thomas Byard Clayton, Vicar of All Hallows, Barking-by-the-Tower.

P. W. MONIE.

April 1927.

PREFACE.

TUBBY asked me some time ago to try to write down what I really believed about Toc H. If I do it, it is with no idea of committing the family, or any member of it, to anything I say. I am just talking out loud, clearing up my own ideas.

I feel intensely that it is not enough for Toc H to succeed, as clearly as it is succeeding at the moment. We want a firm, and perfectly tranquil, conviction that there is a real reason for its success, that somehow its feet have been set on the right road, that its method is, in essentials, a right method, that its progress is not due to the attractiveness of an emotional appeal which will gradually lose its force, that its stability does not depend solely, or even mainly, on the personality of Tubby — still less on the people he has gathered round him, people who are steadily growing older and will before very long be dead. I at least want to be convinced of these things. I am too old to care for “building bravely,” if the building be but lath and plaster. And it is not enough to have faith in Toc H—though without that to begin with we should have gone no way at all. We want to know “where we are going and why we do the things that we do.”

INTRODUCTION.

A ROYAL Charter granted in December 1922 and amended in December 1925 constituted the Toc H Association as it now exists, and the Corporation (the Central Council of Toc H, or Toc H Incorporated) which controls it. Article IV of the Charter now reads as follows:—

“The objects for which the Corporation is established and incorporated and for which the Association is to exist are:—

(1) To preserve amongst men and to transmit to future generations the traditions of Fellowship and Service manifested by all ranks during the Great War, thereby encouraging its members, through the common Christian life of the Association, to seek God, and helping them to find His Will and to do it.

(2) To encourage amongst the members of the Association the desire to perform, and to facilitate the performance of, all kinds of social service as between and for the benefit of all ranks of society.

(3) To promote among all people a wide human interest in the lives and needs of their fellows and to foster in every man a sense of responsibility for the well-being of his fellow man.

(4) To mitigate by habit of mind and word and deed the evils of class-consciousness and to endeavour to create a body of public opinion free of all social antagonisms.

(5) To take over and continue and carry on the work of the existing Association and to take over all its property and assume responsibility for all its

liabilities (including any property and liabilities of the Cavendish Association and to be for all purposes the successors of the existing Association."

Toc H was started in order to maintain the fellowship of Talbot House, Poperinghe and Ypres, which was "plainly too great to lose." The first attempt to define its purpose formally was in the report printed in 1920, as follows:—

"To preserve among the ex-service men of all ranks, and transmit to the younger generation, the traditions of Christian fellowship and service manifested on active service."

Later in 1920 the statement called the "Four Points of the Compass" was prepared, not to supersede this, but to supplement it. It was called "A further statement of our aims as we begin to see them." When the Charter was drawn up the original Object was set out in these words:—

"To preserve amongst ex-service men and to implant and preserve in others and transmit to future generations the traditions of Christian fellowship and service manifested by all ranks of the British Army on Active Service during the Great War."

The other Objects were set out exactly as they are printed above. Objects 2, 3 and 4 were intended to cover the first Three Points of the Compass in so far as they are not already covered by Object 1. No explicit reference was made in the Objects as drawn up in 1922 to the Christian character of Toc H. A few of the people responsible for drawing up the Charter may have thought it undesirable to do this. Most people simply thought it was unnecessary as being plain to everybody who cared to look. When, however, at the Birthday Festival of 1922 Toc H realised that it was becoming a national movement, and that the family had acquired under the Charter very full powers of self-government, it also realised that the Charter failed to safe-guard what was

quite essential. That is why Art. IV (1) was altered in 1925 to the form in which it now stands. This was done very deliberately. The principle of the amendment was accepted by two Councils and by the membership as a whole before the amendment was undertaken. It is, therefore, true to say that while the rest of Art. IV was drawn up for Toc H by a few of its members, the first Object in the form in which it now stands has the whole weight of the Movement behind it.

The resolution in which the Central Council accepted the principle of the amendment of the Charter just referred to is called in Toc H "the Main Resolution of the Council," and reads as follows:—

"Remembering with gratitude how God used the Old House to bring home to multitudes of men that behind the ebb and flow of things temporal stand the eternal realities, and to send them forth strengthened to fight at all costs for the setting up of His Kingdom upon Earth; we pledge ourselves to strive:—

"To listen now and always to the voice of God;

"To know His Will revealed in Christ and to do it fearlessly, reckoning nothing of the world's opinion or its successes for ourselves or this our family; and towards this end:—

"To think fairly, to love widely, to witness humbly, to build bravely."

The statement called the Four Points of the Compass is set out below:—

"I. FELLOWSHIP: *To found a series of self-supporting Branches and Groups for the fostering of a new spirit between man and man.*

(These branches develop their own life and line of work in accordance with the chief need of their locality. Their task is not to compete with existing organisations, but to supplement and reinforce them. They meet regularly for supper and discussion, exhibiting by the diversity of the members in origin, occupation and outlook, a spirit

of reconciliation between the classes). They are pledged :—

To a wide human *interest* in the lives and needs of their fellows.

To the *study* of local conditions, civic, social and religious, and to *challenge their generation* to seek in all things the mind of Christ.

To *mitigate* by habit of mind and word and deed the evils of class consciousness.

To be *responsible* for the welcome and well-being of those commended to their friendship.

II. SERVICE: *To establish Centres, (Group, Branch or House) throughout the country and overseas, whence the elder may serve the younger, and the friendly the lonely.*

(Also, to make possible a Headquarters staff which can be at the service of the Movement as a whole).

III. FAIRMINDEDNESS: *To bring the expert to the group, to hear him and ask him questions; to listen hospitably and humbly to Everyman's story, and to help the truth to prevail.*

(The representative group thus educates itself, and what public opinion it can influence; with the object always that from it social love may radiate, and the spirit of class war be exorcised, under the redemptive influence of the common loss).

IV. THE KINGDOM OF GOD: *To spread the Gospel without preaching it."*

The following is the Prayer for all members of Toc H which is frequently referred to :—

"O GOD, who hast so wonderfully made Toc H, and set men in it to see their duty as Thy will, teach us to live together in love and joy and peace; to check all bitterness; to disown discouragement; to practice thanksgiving, and to leap with joy to any task for others. Strengthen the good thing thus begun; that with gallant and high-hearted happiness we may work for Thy Kingdom in the wills of men. Through Jesus Christ Our Lord. Amen."

(A) WHY DOES TOC H EXIST?

TOC H used to be explained simply as "Tubby's show". This is true, and Toc H will never forget it.

But it is not all the truth, and it never was really. The question can equally well be put like this, *Why did Tubby found Toc H?* The answer is the same, for it happens to be a historical fact. Before I state it, I wish to digress for a moment.

What brought many of us into Toc H, and what holds us, is a conviction that there is a purpose for it far greater than any of the people who appear to be running it. This conviction may be quite baseless. The point is that it exists. "Again"—as the parsons say—one of the reasons why Toc H is often hard to explain is that none of its members have planned or designed it: it has grown: it has happened. It is easier to explain a piece of machinery made to order than a living thing in evolution. "We can never indeed understand any process of evolution until we know it as a whole from first to last. The points that are sensitive to light in the skins of rudimentary organisms appear to us for the first time in their true aspect when we can trace their connection with the retina and the lenses of the human eye." Apparently, if Toc H is—as so many of its members believe—a living thing and not a piece of machinery, we shall not begin to understand it until we have some idea of what the purpose for it is—if indeed there is one.

It is easy to say that this is just fancy. And it is easier, and more polite, to say that even if it is true, even if Toc H began in this rather odd way, it is now growing up and must presently become an organised society to be judged by ordinary standards, without—here the politeness fades away—any of this semi-mystical nonsense. It might even become a well-organised and efficient social service bureau.

I cannot argue with the people who say things like this. I can only assert that such a society would not be the Toc H we have known, and are trying to pass on. But I think that the sort of development they anticipate may come about unless we are quite determined that it shall not. Many people thought it was going to happen when they read the Royal Charter for the first time. It did not, but the risk of its happening continues. Still, after all, it is a risk common to everything which is alive at all—the risk of exchanging the interesting, and often joyous, condition of life for the dull security of death. That is why a challenge to life is always a challenge to adventure, a challenge to a Christian life most of all. The hill we set ourselves to climb in that case is so steep and so high, and so extraordinarily slippery, and we always wish “to attain the heights without making the right beginning.”

But to challenge people to go on climbing this hill is the real business of Toc H, if it remembers its beginning. The “Main Resolution”, which is printed on the back of every membership form, says plainly enough why Toc H exists, why it was founded. The people who began to build it did not know what they meant to build, and I cannot find that they cared much about anything except this. They wanted to build a thing as like in spirit to Talbot House, Poperinghe, as possible, and they prayed, and hoped—with the sort of hope that is based upon indelible experience—that as God had used the Old House, so He would use the house of Toc H that now is, and is becoming.

So much must, I think, be accepted as historical fact.

Toc H does not ask those who join it to accept on trust the 'religious experience' on which it is based. And it does not require them to be convinced in advance that anything real and lasting can be achieved on this method. It does ask them definitely to come in the spirit of a learner, and it does ask them, when they come into the family, to work and to listen and to pray. Toc H is based on the conviction that for those who wish to "attain the heights" this is "the right beginning." It was not a new discovery. The originality of Toc H lies in the recapturing of a very old "secret", and in linking it with the finest tradition of comradeship and service, and the most poignant experiences, of the war. I hope to explain that later. What I am concerned with now is that we who came in later should remember why Toc H began.

(B) IS TOC H "FACING BOTH WAYS"?

TALBOT House, Poperinghe, was Everyman's Club, and the old signboard still hangs outside the office in Mark II. Is that merely for sentimental reasons?

On the other hand, no one who knows the facts, or has read *Tales of Talbot House* with understanding, can reasonably doubt that the Upper Room was the heart of the house and the source of its life. And it is just plain fact that those who founded Toc H and those who have kept control of it until now are people to whom the Upper Room and what it stands for are utterly vital.

Toc H then, growing out of Talbot House, rests on a double tradition, that of the open door of Everyman's Club, and that of a real devotion to things which Everyman, in the main, rejects. (I do not think we ought to give up the word 'devotion' because some people water it down. There still are places in the world where people are devoted to idols. That is not a matter of feeling at all, but of fact, of a fixed, continuous condition. The people belong to the idol, and in everything they do, and everything that happens to them, that fact has to be reckoned with.)

Can Toc H maintain both of these traditions, and is it in fact doing so? Are not the two ideals, that of keeping the door open to Everyman, and that of maintaining, and passing on, a real and deep devotion, in fact incompatible?

Can Toc H, at the same time be Everyman's Club, and also, quite definitely, a Christian family?

Some of the people who would say that it must choose between the two point to the fact that, in spite of the width of its appeal, it is still a small society. And to the

fact that while it grows and spreads, while many new members are coming in, smaller (but quite considerable) numbers are dropping out.

I suggest that the first point to get clear about is how the two traditions stand to one another, the tradition of the door open to Everyman, and the tradition of devotion. Looked at as ideals at which Toc H is aiming, are they on the same plane or on different planes? I have said (it seems to me simple fact) that the Upper Room was the heart of the Old House. This analogy might help, but I think a better analogy to try, as a means of illustrating the relation between the two traditions, is that between the body and the germ-plasm. 'The body does not produce the germ-plasm; on the other hand, the germ-plasm produces the body', and also determines its characters. The body, on this figure, is the House that Love built, the spirit of fellowship and service and fairmindedness which are the first three points of our Compass. The germ-plasm is the love that built the House, the love that was drawn from and given to Love Himself.

I think this analogy helps us at once to put the two things, the two traditions of Toc H, in their right relation. Perhaps the easiest way to test this is to try to think what Talbot House, Poperinghe, would have been like if it had had no Upper Room; or if the Innkeeper had been just the jolliest and most compelling of friends, and not also a true lover of our Lord.

If the two traditions of Toc H stand to one another in this sort of way, there is no question of their being incompatible. Toc H, if it abandoned *either* of them would not be itself. Some of its friends profess to see a danger of its becoming a closed circle of pious folk. There is no such danger. The nearer we get to the true inner tradition, the more we know that the real call to Toc H is to go into the highways and byways and compel men to come to the marriage feast. There never can be at the gate of Toc H either a doctrinal test, or a test of spiritual attainment. The door must always be open to those who

cannot yet see or believe what some of us do, but who still wish to come in and try our basis out in the only way in which it can be tried out, by trying to live it. So far, however, they must go with us. They *must* accept the fact that Toc H is a Christian family. No one is entitled to demand membership of any society on condition that it turns itself into something else. 'The right of the individual to be free must give way to the duty of the society to be itself'. The only bar which Toc H sets up against Everyman when he wishes to come in is its own duty to be itself, to be true to its deepest traditions. There is however a practical limitation to the admission of Everyman in bulk, if I may say so. A self-governing society which has the sort of tradition to pass on which we have, dare not grow faster than it can impress its own "character" on its recruits. That is why Toc H is still a small society, and why, though it must now grow in many places, it must grow in each place slowly.

There is another limitation on our rate of growth, of quite a different kind. Toc H has beyond question something in it which attracts. It will always be attracting people whom it cannot absorb, people who presently are rejected or reject themselves. At the outset Toc H asks little, and makes the giving of that little as easy as possible. But of many it comes in time to ask very much, and there are people who just will not learn that it is only by giving—often only by giving a very great deal—that we can find out for ourselves the things that matter to us most. These people, if they come into Toc H, often go out again.

Now I think we can answer the question we began with. Toc H is facing both ways, and must go on doing so. It still aims at being Everyman's Club *because* its heart is set on Everyman's home. And the old signboard hangs outside headquarters *because* the Carpenter's Bench still stands in Mark I.

As I am only talking out loud, I want to say something more about the germ-plasm which has served as a figure

of the inner tradition of Toc H. The main point about the germ-plasm is that, if given a chance of surviving, it does not die as our bodies do, but goes on and on, living in and making generations yet undreamt of. It only becomes ours when it makes us, and from the point of view of biology, which thinks much of the race and very little of the individual, our primary business is to pass it on unimpaired. A pair of American writers put it like this. The individual, they say, "is of little account in the world; his existence is hardly justified, *unless* he discharges faithfully his trust, passing on to the future the Lamp of Life whose fire he has been created to guard a little while". Is not this worth thinking of for a moment? It was Canon Peter Green, I think, who said that what the world wants is not you or me but God. If the story of Talbot House means anything at all, it means that there men really and truly found God—found Him through fellowship and service and sacrifice and real goodwill—and, having found God, were enabled to show in their own lives something of His courage and His patience and His faithfulness. That is how they lit the lamps which it is our job to maintain. All of us have to try, in our little ways, 'to carry our Christ with us through the world; not to let Him die within our souls; but to let Him shine through, illuminating our whole lives'. The final job of Toc H is to help men to do just that. That is why we must hold on above everything to the inner tradition, as I have called it, the tradition of real devotion. But we have to remember that we are traitors if we are content to rest in that. Our job is to pass it on, remembering that it was for Everyman that the Elder Brethren gave their lives—for whom Our Lord gave His.

(II) WHAT KIND OF SOCIETY IS TOC H?

THIS is the most difficult question of all. It is the most important, and it is controversial. Or rather, controversy hangs upon it, for on the answer depends not only what Toc H may do but what it may not do, which is a more serious matter.

I have never met any society at all like Toc H. And I have never met anyone else who has. I *almost* agree with the people who say it is unique. Its being unique—if it is so—did not matter very much when hardly anyone, even among its members, believed that the thing was going to succeed. It is beginning to matter now. For things which are unique are apt to have a bad time in a world which is becoming more and more standardised and classified. Unkind people want to run steam-rollers over them, to flatten them out, to cut them into convenient shapes and generally fit them for the labels which simplify life for us by saving us the trouble of thinking. Kind people want to improve them, to set them on the right way, to make them more effective, to get them to *do* something. Some of these kind people have their eyes on Toc H now. They love it, quite possibly, as much as I do, but they are thinking of certain causes, admirable causes, behind which they wish to see ranged the whole of its growing power. Even I can think of such causes. But, from force of circumstances rather than from choice, I happen to be Administrator, and I imagine that my main job as such is to advocate, in season and out of season, even against my best friends, the right of Toc H to be itself. I do not wish to wake up in the

morning and find Toc H developed into a propagandist society, even if I entirely agree with the cause it proposes to support. I do not say that Toc H is better than many admirable, and apparently more effective, societies I know; just as I do not say that convinced Christians are better than other people. They are different; and Toc H is different, and ought, I think, to remain so.

In April 1919 Tubby was writing this:- "What, then, is to happen to the fellowship of Talbot House? It is plainly too great to lose. Its lovers have a dream of finding some house, a difficult task; and the rent thereof, a task not less difficult; of hoisting the old signboard there, and taking the consequences." There was somehow or other to be a place where the fellowship could be re-assembled, and the Elder Brethren remembered. For the rest of what was to be done, 'its lovers' had no idea, except—rather an important exception—that that they were to seek "God's will for Talbot House in town." It was an odd way of starting a world-wide society, of building the thing which the Birthday Festival of 1925 signified. But these people were not thinking of that. They saw clearly the way, if not the means, to the first step, and that was enough.

Professor L. T. Hobhouse* contrasts the business organization—as the type of human association which has been designed or planned for a definite purpose or end—with the community. The first may be so big that the individual worker, or member, may have no idea of the thing as a whole, of anything but his own little part in it. But the distinguishing mark of this type of association is that someone in it sees, or has seen, beyond it, that the whole thing is planned for the workers or members, though they may not know it. The 'community' is quite different, for "whatever brains go into the conduct of the community it is certain that its general outlines have never been successfully planned. It has taken shape as men growing up or thrown together have shaken down into a pattern of life which no one deliberately lays down."

* Social Development.

I have said already that no one has designed or planned Toc H, that it has grown, has happened. Clearly, I think, it is a society of the community type, and not a society organised and planned for a specific purpose, like a business concern, or the societies of which I shall say a word in a moment. The fact that we are an Association incorporated by Royal Charter must not mislead us. The law does not provide for the incorporation of communities in the sense in which we are using the word. We have had to adopt, for certain quite limited purposes, the same kind of legal clothing as the Church Building Society and the Inebriates' Reformation and After-care Association, both of which are societies of the kind that I am concerned to show that Toc H is *not*. But the fact that I find an overcoat necessary does not make me an overcoat. Neither does the form of incorporation, or the definition of its objects in the Charter, of itself make the Toc H movement any the less a community, a living, growing thing.

Let us add to the two societies I have just mentioned a few more. The Ostrich and Fancy Feather Trade Society, the National Citizens' Union, the National Protestant League, the Canine Defence League, the Anglo-Catholic Congress—these perhaps make a sufficiently impartial list. All of these, Professor McDougall would tell us, I expect, are, like Toc H, the “work of the gregarious impulse operating in conjunction with other impulses.” They all have a definite, common interest which must be shared by the people who belong to them, however diverse these people may be in all other ways. The impulse which “combined with the gregarious impulse” in the forming of these innumerable other societies of the same type was the conviction or the feeling that certain things want to be done or certain opinions want to be propagated. If I share the conviction or give way to the feeling, I may join the appropriate society and derive real satisfaction from doing so, even if I dislike everything about my fellow members except the conviction or the feeling which we share. These are

societies of fractions of people, of abstractions from people. Behind my interest in defending canines or keeping up the price of fancy feathers is the real *me*, most of which stops outside when I go, if I ever do go, to the meetings of these societies. Now in Toc H we may, and sometimes do, dislike our fellow members' opinions intensely, but we cannot be happy in the family if we dislike *them*. And I have suspected for some time that one of the peculiarities of Toc H is that it is *not* a society of fractions of people, or abstractions from people, but of whole men. It has seemed to me increasingly during the last three years a thing into which we can and do bring more and more of our real selves, of that inner life which is often "dimly guessed at by those who know us best, and only very imperfectly realised by ourselves." And I have seemed to see as a result of this numbers of men learning a great deal, often with quite curious results. This, of course, is to be expected if it be true, as I have no doubt it is, that it is this inner life which makes, and can re-make, the outer life which other people see. Toc H is not merely, so it seems to me, a society of whole men as distinct from a collection of people banded together because they agree about certain things. It is becoming more and more conscious of itself as a whole. The Albert Hall gathering, on the 19th December, 1925, was a severe test of this, and there was not any doubt about the result. There were people there who did not belong, but most of them belonged before the end. They had become conscious of the family. The real member of Toc H is conscious of this all the time. The family is becoming more and more part of his real life and a source of strength to him. It does not consist for him of people with whom he combines for particular purposes, material, intellectual or spiritual, or exist to spread particular opinions. He takes the other members with all their opinions; however preposterous he may think them, with all the marks of difference between

him and them, and—at least at the moments when consciousness of the family grips him hardest—he does not want to alter them or their opinions one little bit. He sees how the diversities contribute to the life of the family, and it is the life of the family he cares about, and the fact that it is helping him to find his own real life. There is something more to be said about this than we shall find in Professor Hobhouse, but for the moment let us go back to him. He talks about group mentality, and he contrasts the types of mentality developed in different kinds of groups. The main difference he notes is that between groups in which the individual is conscious only of a very small part of the whole that he belongs to, and groups in which some or even all of the members are aware of the whole of such. The former, he says, are, in the eyes of the psychologists, networks of minds operating each with its own ends in view. The others are something more. The interaction of the members on one another produces a higher and more comprehensive system of thought or life. There results a specific mental system to which each member makes a partial but articulate contribution. This is a severely bald interpretation of a thing about which the instinct of the members of Toc H is quite clear and sure. Whenever they are gathered together in numbers what they want most of all is not to talk, or be talked to, about this or that, however interesting or important, but to be helped to realise more clearly than before the unity of the family and its reality and its worth.

Everyone who truly knows Toc H has insisted from the earliest days that it is a family. Here is another word that wants to be looked at critically. A family is quite a special type of community. It rests on physical facts independent of the opinions, and purposes, and dispositions, of the people who compose it. Unless underlying Toc H there are facts similarly independent of us, and, unless we recognise that they exist, it is senti-

mental, to say the least, to call it a family. Now I think it is true that To-day, as when it began, bases its fellowship simply and definitely on the Fatherhood of God, and knows that it cannot be realised except through the power of Our Lord Jesus Christ. The point to hold and maintain is that this is the very essence of the movement.

Very many people nowadays recognise not only the worth of fellowship but its necessity. "We cannot be ourselves without others. If I am to be all that my capacity for the family affections would have me be, I must live in a family, and if I would be any of the things that would make me a man, I must for their completeness live in a society. I must do so; not primarily for what I get from the society but what I give; not for what I receive but for what I spend, for my own impulses, cravings, capacities that I fulfil in social life." Professor Hobhouse takes us as far as this. But there is more to be said. Let F. R. Barry take us further. "Fellowship is no automatic growth. It is made possible by Christ. (It is) the consummation of that natural tendency to co-operation, traceable all through the order of the Universe, which is the divine love coming to its fulfilment. . . . But all love, (and) all progress in co-operation, necessarily involves sacrifice. No group can remain at the level of true fellowship if it is content to be a closed system. For there is in genuine fellowship an impulse to be always sharing its life with others. An intense consciousness of antagonism against some other group may stimulate for a time a strong sense of group-unity. (But this) is not lasting, and it is less than fellowship, for that fellowship should consist of opposition to other fragmentary fellowships is plainly enough self-contradictory. Fellowship is by nature inclusive. The Fellowship of the Christian Society. . . is a world-enlisting enterprise against all which makes genuine fellowship impossible. It is love sacrificing itself to conquer hate."

Now we can see, I think, not only why in the prayer* for all members of Toc H we dare to say that God made it, but why we call Toc H a family. But we must face the consequences of what we say. A family, if it deserves the name at all, is a fellowship the breaking up of which is unthinkable. And Toc H began just because the fellowship of Talbot House was plainly too great to lose, and because "its lovers" were clear that God had some purpose for it, if it would survive. It is clear to me now that some of us, many of us perhaps, will have to make sacrifices for Toc H of a sort that we never expected to be asked to make. We shall not, it is true, be asked to give up or even to compromise our own convictions. But we shall be asked to throw away our chances, be they great or small, of getting the whole weight of Toc H, or the bulk of it, behind causes that are very near to our hearts. For, if we were to win, we should be breaking up the family, however small the number who had to go because they could not support our cause. We should be setting one fragmentary fellowship against another. However little we succeeded, we should have begun to destroy Toc H. We should be lowering it from the level of a family, even from the level of a community, and setting it on the way to become a propagandist society. That would clearly *not* be Toc H, even if we called it so. It would be tragic to throw away Toc H for any such purpose, when all good causes, and some bad ones, have, or can have, all the propagandist societies they want. But there is a far stronger reason for not doing it. There are few people better fitted than F. R. Barry to tell Toc H what fellowship really and truly means. If he is right in what he said, and if I am right in thinking that the essential purpose for Toc H is that it should spread far and wide wherever it can—across all diversities of class and origin, of occupation *and* opinion—a fellowship which we hope that God will use as He used that of the Old House—if this is so, then truly I think that none of us need be grieved if Toc H cannot agree to support all the

* Introduction, p. viii.

causes we have at heart. We are free to do what we can for those causes elsewhere. In Toc H, whatever our differences, in fact because of them, we are privileged to work for some greater thing, greater than we can fully realise; and because that is its job, Toc H, as a society, must keep out of many controversies in which its members take different sides. People say, and will say, that this is senseless; that to achieve anything in this way is impossible. That is not our concern. We know it would be impossible if *we* were trying to do it. But, looking back to the origin of the movement and the history of it, we are content to say, with the 1922 Birthday Conference, that Toc H is and intends to remain, a family. And we know who is the Head of the family. And we are content.

III. THE FOUR POINTS OF THE COMPASS. (A)

I THINK that the Four Points form the most important statement ever made about Toc H. And I am sure that very many members will agree. But I am not so sure that either they or I know enough about the Four Points or what they commit us to. I think we ought to try to find out. I shall not attempt to say anything new; I shall merely be "seeking a clearer view of the end or good to which" the life of Toc H is "actually directed." Behind all that I have to say about the Four Points lie the ideas I was trying to bring out in the last little paper, that Toc H is a family, that the family is not merely the sum of its members, but something more, and that through its common life all its members can learn much.

The Four Points were drawn up by Tubby and Alec Paterson* and "Dick" Sheppard† some time in 1920. They started with the fact that Toc H existed—at that time barely existed—in order to continue and pass on the fellowship of Talbot House, which "plainly was too great to lose;" with the facts of Talbot House itself and the Oxford & Bermondsey Club—to which Toc H owes much more than most of it knows—and the small beginnings in London. They met at St. Martin's-in-the-Fields at Communion, and they met again at breakfast, and then they talked; and they did it again, and again, till the Four Points emerged from prayer and discussion. They called them a "further statement of our aims as we begin to see them." They too, I fancy, thought that they were not inventing anything, but trying to draw out and explain something which had been entrusted to them—the same thing which is now entrusted to all of us also.

* Alexander Paterson, M.C. one of H.M.'s Commissioners of Prisons.

† The Rev. H. R. L. Sheppard, Vicar of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields.

The Four Points, in their "potted" form, are Fellowship, Service, Fairmindedness, and the Kingdom of God. The purpose of Toc H is that men should learn of these things "through the common Christian life of the family." Men can and do learn of them in other ways. And there is a Society (or there are Societies destined someday to be one) whose very special concern all these things are. We shall presently have to consider what the true relationship of Toc H is to the Church, or to the Churches to which we belong. At the moment we are concerned with the Four Points of the Toc H Compass. I propose to start with the third and work back to the first, and to write of the Fourth Point last of all, in December.

The Point about Fairmindedness reads:- "to bring the expert to the group, to hear him and ask him questions; to listen humbly and hospitably to Everyman, and to help the truth to prevail." The word "expert" is not used in any technical or "highbrow" sense. It means the man who really knows what he is talking about, who has had actual experience. He may be just a labourer who knows what it means to be a labourer. The sting of the Point is in the tail. It is easy to listen to the expert and to ask him questions. It is fairly easy to listen to him hospitably. But we are to listen humbly also—which is quite often *not* easy—and we are to help the truth to prevail. The fairmindedness which the Third Point demands is not a sterile thing. It is real, sincere active goodwill. And just as true fellowship "is no automatic growth," neither is real goodwill. It is often against our instincts or our prejudices, or even our interests. If we yield to it, we are apt to run into—or try to run away from—the awkward fact which has been expressed thus:- "it is the special business of truth to move us to action." We cannot "hold down the truth in unrighteousness." Or rather I suppose we can, if we care to forget that St. Paul promised the wrath of God to those who did: which amounts, I suppose, to the same thing as saying that we shall be held to account for all the good we have seen and

not done—a thought as uncomfortable as it is stimulating. The writer I have quoted goes on at once to point out not only the extraordinary difficulty of seeing the truth but of acting rightly on it when seen. He is clear that we must begin by taking ourselves in hand, and *one* of the things he bids us do—I shall come back to him later—is to fight for real goodwill. He is a matter-of-fact person who knows quite well that this may mean scouring laziness and self-interest and covetousness and other adhesive things out of our hearts. But he thinks that it has to be done, because it was to men of goodwill, and not to all and sundry, that peace was promised.

The Third Point evidently involves much more than the running of guest-nights, with interesting speakers on a diversity of subjects. Let us look at the Second.

One of our aims, it tells us, is “to establish centres throughout the country and overseas, whence the elder may serve the younger, and the friendly the lonely.” “There is a saying,” the Patron told us once, “that youth must be served; we in Toc H say, youth must serve.” “What is service?” asks the ritual, and it answers, “the rent we pay for our room on earth.” If anyone thinks this sentimental, I commend to him the following passage, which has a bearing on more Points of the Compass than the Second.

T. H. Green spent some time in contrasting the ideas in regard to virtue of the Greek philosophers with the ideas which resulted from the spread of Christianity. “Human brotherhood,” he said,* “had no meaning for them, the Greek philosophers. They had no adequate notion of the claims in response to which their goodwill ought to be exercised. . . . (Owing to Christianity, there) has resulted a change in the ideal of what (the) full realisation (of the soul of society) would be, and consequently a change in the conception of what is required of the individual. . . . In particular the idea has been formed of the possible inclusion of all men in a society of equals. . . . For those citizens of Christen-

* Prolegomena to Ethics.

dom, on whom the idea of Christendom has taken hold, such a society does actually exist. For them—according to their conscientious conviction, if not according to their practice—mankind is a society of which the members owe reciprocal services to one another, simply as man to man.” “There is sometimes,” says someone else, “a lie of act implied in our whole life, a practical negation of our faith: love summons us, but egoism prevails. If we really wish for life, we must aim at unity of purpose and true loyalty.” If Green was right in saying that the idea of Christendom, when it takes hold, produces a conscientious conviction in favour of—to use our words—fellowship and service and goodwill, a society which is really trying to express these things in practice, in the name of the King of Christendom, surely has a rational purpose. And Toc H is one of the societies which are trying to do this—more power to all the rest. Even if we are not doing very much, not even as much as we might, it is something to have our feet set on the road. Toc H has just begun.

Leaving out complaints of ordinary failures, such as we shall always have, I find two sets of members dissatisfied with the kind of service which Toc H is trying to do to-day. Some of us say that all the work we do, good though much of it is, is only “salvage work,” and that we must try as a society to grapple with more serious things. We must face, some of them say, the assumptions on which our industrialised civilisation rests—and by face I think they mean challenge. As an individual I can go quite a long way with some of these people. But they—and some others—were in my mind when I wrote last month’s little paper. I was trying then to tell them why I think that Toc H, as a society, must not commit itself to any one set of opinions—outside things which concern its own life as a family—however good those opinions may seem to some of us, however important their subject. The amended Charter makes possible the forming of affiliated societies among the members, to

deal with special matters or subjects. Some of these may well be societies of men agreeing on a common basis, whether economic or religious, or whatever it may be. Toc H itself cannot become any of these specialised societies, though it may, if they are carrying the spirit of Toc H into their special work, decide to affiliate them. Whether it does or not, the Toc H men who embark on these special enterprises will have much, I think, to learn from the common life of the family, with its "rich diversity" of opinions—and may perhaps have something to give back to it.

Others, including a number of foundation members, are dissatisfied because they are afraid that Toc H is being deflected from its original purpose. They knew the Old House. They know, as many members do not know, why Toc H began. They find it difficult to connect with Toc H as they know it the use of Jobmaster's forms, job-ledgers, and so on. (They do not know, most of them, that the men who introduced these things are Toc H to the finger-tips). They see men, many of them new to Toc H, specialising in club-work, or scouting, or after-care, and stressing its importance, as they think, unduly. The thoroughly sound idea that a Christian society doing social service from a Christian motive ought to try to do it as efficiently as any other, makes it appears, no strong appeal to them. They see more and more attention being paid in many places to corporate jobs, and they think they see some jobmasters or some branches trying to run a high "score" of work done. They know that much of the best work that has been done in and through Toc H, as out of it, has not been work that can be computed and tabulated and added up, or discussed in branch news or even talked about at all. They are afraid that the spirit of Toc H is changing, and sometimes, I suspect, they think they are regarded as "back-numbers." I can understand this and, within limits, sympathise. But I cannot sympathise with want of faith in the capacity of Toc H to master the tools

which it must use more and more as it grows larger. I remember the people who thought that the formalities of the Charter would kill the family spirit. There are members even to-day who cannot realise that correct account-keeping is necessary, or a card-index of real value. If we are to make the most of the spirit of service which grows in Toc H we must not be afraid to use any method that helps to make it more effective. We must not even be afraid to classify and tabulate, where doing this helps, as it very often does. But we must use all these methods as tools, not supposing—do any of us suppose it?—that the soul of Toc H lives in them any more than it lives in the Treasurer's ledger. All those who use them need to remember specially the very many things to which no such methods can be applied.

If we can agree about principles, we shall have less misunderstanding and fewer differences about methods. "There are nine-and-sixty ways of constructing tribal lays. And every single one of them is right." What really matters about service in Toc H is surely the motive of it, and the end of it, rather than the method—though that should be a right method for the purpose in hand. To be perfectly simple about it, if there is any meaning at all in the things I have been trying to say about Toc H, the motive, whatever it was at the beginning, should be becoming more and more clearly love of our Lord and joy in serving Him. If it is, we shall not need to concern ourselves about the result. It will be safe—in other hands. If Toc H really is "God's show," the final standard of judgment, whether of branches and groups or of individuals—I do not say our standard, but do our judgments matter?—is determined by that fact. And the test for Toc H will, I think, rest on the lives of its members, their whole lives, and not on the jobs they have done, whether they have done them secretly and individually, or corporately and in public. A little law-book I had to read once quoted a saying of a great judge:—"God alone knoweth the

heart of man ; we can tell his intentions only by what he does." At the time my attention was concentrated on the second part of the sentence. The book used it to lead up to some of the principles which determine what evidence is and what is not relevant in courts of law. But it is of the first part that I am thinking now. I cannot look back on Toc H in the last three years and think only of its successes. I have to think of its failures too, of all our failures. But when I think that where the judgment lies there is full knowledge of the inner heart of it, I cannot quite despair.

I think we must end with a "hard saying." The Second Point of the Compass threatens to take some of those who accept it rather a long way. We shall not all be able to limit our liability. Let T. H. Green state the issue dispassionately. The matter is too serious for emotion. "There are men, we know, who with the keenest sensibility to such pleasures as those of gratified ambition and love of learning yet deliberately forego them ; who shut themselves out from an abundance of æsthetic enjoyments which would be open to them, as well as from those of family life ; and who do this in order to meet the claims which the work of realising the possibilities of the human soul in society seems to make upon them. Such sacrifices are made now, as they were not made in the days of the Greek philosophers . . . because men have become alive to claims to which, with the most open eye and heart, they could not be alive then." Could not, because the cross on Calvary had not then opened men's eyes, so that they might see, if they would.

There are some things which even in Toc H cannot be talked of yet. And because of this one of the fundamental facts about it is in great danger of being forgotten. It is that very much indeed of Toc H is based on the life of one of its members who has done all that Green has said—done it quite simply as his job. Hardly any of the people who have helped to lay the foundation of

Toc H do not owe him more than they can say: very many men owe to him their souls. Many of us, utterly incapable of what he has done, and is, have realised through his life that "sacrifice is the force that makes Christians," and have learnt to give more easily and more gladly the service that we are capable of. We must not allow even the best men we know to stand—it is the last thing they would wish—between us and the Sun. But we are so weak that we need men to mediate Him to us. And we must pray that some day we may all meet such others in the fellowship of Toc H. If we do, and if our eyes are open, we shall be humbled to the dust. But it will be extraordinarily good for us, and for Toc H.

IV. THE FOUR POINTS OF THE COMPASS. (B)

I PROMISED last month to come back to the First Point* of the Compass, which deals with fellowship.

This form of words was arrived at, as I have said, after much discussion. One of the early drafts of it read like this:- "to treat every fellow-worker as a brother, not asking from what school he came, or how his father earned his daily bread." This form, to my mind, points more directly to an idea on which, as we go on, we lay more and more stress, the idea of Toc H as a "human zoo." The phrase was originally used in contempt by a stray visitor who was unhappy at a branch meeting. We have made it a "plank in our platform." It does not really express what we are driving at. The animals in the zoo are carefully sorted out; the giraffe does not sup with the kangaroo and the elephant. Our idea, however, is that in order to really get the Toc H spirit, we must not merely collect people of all sorts, but mix them up thoroughly. This is a feature of our fellowship which many people, otherwise quite friendly, dislike, or disapprove, or fail to understand. They can see that a branch might happen to be thoroughly mixed. What puzzles them is that the mixture should be deliberately played for, and planned, and thought so important. Many of them have asked me why we do it, and have not always seemed satisfied with such answers as they have had. Perhaps it is necessary to dig a little deeper. Even if I succeed in showing only that the idea of the "mixture" is not a fad, and that the reason for it, whatever it may be, is not a superficial one, that may be worth while.

* Introduction p. vii.

It is curious that the First Point, while it mentions many of the inequalities among men, says nothing expressly of those which seem to be primary, to be the cause—in the long run, when several generations are thought of together—of many, at least, of the rest. Here are two sentences from a little paper by the Rev. G. A. Studdert Kennedy:- “The real inequalities are natural inequalities, inequalities of capacity and power, and though these inequalities may be intensified and exaggerated by becoming incarnate in institutions and traditions, you cannot obliterate them by changing the tradition or destroying the institution. They can only be obliterated by whole peoples coming to a belief in God, whose Infinity reduces all our finite differences to equality.” (The second of these sentences does not seem to me to say quite all that should be said. And it rather belongs to the old dispensation, while we, and “Woodbine Willie” also, are concerned with the new. “Under the first dispensation men were the servants of God; under the second they were called to be His sons.” I think that the men who founded Toc H because the Old House had helped them to see God, saw Him not so much in His Might as in His Beauty. And I think it is that and His Love and—if it may be said—His Simpleness that compel allegiance. Surely the most astounding fact of all is that He should choose to dwell in the hearts of men. It is that, I think, and not His infinity which “reduces all our differences to equality.”)

The existence of natural inequalities among men is not, however, the only fact we have to face. There is the way in which these differences appear to be distributed. We are told this sort of thing. If you take, say, 100,000 men and classify them in a number of grades according to general mental capacity, or any special kind of capacity that is fairly common, and then plot a curve representing the numbers in each grade, you get a curve of a certain definite type. And if you collect another 100,000 men from somewhere else, and do the same with them, you get

a curve of the same type. And if you roll a sufficient number of beans down a smooth board, slightly sloping, you find that many go down straight or nearly straight, some go a little on either side, a smaller number go further from the centre-line—some to the right, some to the left—a still smaller number go further off, and so on. And if you plot a curve showing the way in which the beans behave when treated in this fashion, you get the same type of curve as before. And it is called, they tell us, the curve of normal chance or probability. I can grasp the fact that many people are cleverer than I am, and I am not seriously upset by the fact that a few appear to be even more stupid. But that anyone should be able to say: "If only I can collect enough of you fellows, and sort you out by your height, or by your quickness in the picking out the A's in a page of print, or the general goodness of your brains, I can tell you in advance roughly how many of you will come into the second and how many into the twenty-second grade"—that sort of thing has given me a shiver down my spine. That men *can* be "sorted out" in this kind of way seemed to me a grim thing, hard to understand and hard to accept. Why should men vary so much in every sort of capacity? Why is it possible to represent, even vaguely, these differences by such a thing as "a normal curve of chance?"

To say that things happen by chance is only to say shortly that they are the result of a large number of causes, and that we are not able to disentangle the effects of each of the causes from the effects of the others. The fact that we cannot see, much less explain, the purpose behind a thing does not prove that there is none. Mr. W. W. Carlile refers* to a curious fact noted by Charles Darwin, that among many sorts of birds the cocks become, from generation to generation, more and more beautiful. He is not satisfied with Darwin's suggestion that this happens *because* the hens think highly of beautiful forms and colours. The increase in beauty going on and on, must, he thinks, mean a coming nearer to an *ideal* of beauty

*Monetary Economics.

existing in some mind that does not cease to exist as each generation passes away. "How otherwise can we represent to ourselves the gradual evolution of the 'eyes' on a peacock's tail, or the still more wonderful 'eyes' on the wing feathers of the Argus pheasant, that represent with such incredible accuracy the effect of light shining on a convex surface? Surely we have in such facts evidence good enough for most of us that there must be somehow, and somewhere, at work in Nature a mind that is not bound up with the cerebration of any single individual.' I do not wish to stress this, or other things of the sort, unduly. But I think they do suggest that we should leave a door open for the hope that what we in Toc H are used to calling 'a rich diversity of creatures,' is not so meaningless as might appear, and that even behind the way in which the inequalities are distributed there may—though we cannot see it—be a purpose. It is interesting to note that people have argued quite seriously that it is necessary that created beings should be very varied indeed in order to express under the greatest possible number of aspects the simple perfection of God whence they flow. That at least expresses a point of view which is perhaps liable to be overlooked. And so, I think, does a saying of Dr. Johnson, quoted by Coventry Patmore that inequality is the source of all delight."

I have been trying, more or less at random, to 'set in a wide room'—I fear I have set against a dark background—the idea that a thorough mixture of all sorts and conditions of people is *necessary* in Toc H. The thing is serious because behind the idea stands, for what it is worth, the view, not only that all the differences and inequalities we have had in our minds, and the consequences that flow from them, do not really matter, but that in aiming at a fellowship, which of set purpose brushes all things aside, we are doing something which is fundamentally right. To my mind, either these ideas are nonsense, or else in pressing the First Point upon us, in stressing the idea of the "human zoo," Toc H is help-

ing us to hold a deep truth of the sort that can be held only if we try to live them. Frankly, I think these ideas *are* just nonsense, "if Christ be not risen"; but Toc H has no meaning to me if it is not helping men to know that "He is risen indeed." (Did not Tubby, writing of the Old House in 1919, say that "He has here been seen by about five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain unto the present, but some are fallen asleep?" And is it not of the deepest experience of all who really know Toc H that that can still be said?)

I have already, in commenting on a few words I quoted from Mr. Studdert Kennedy, hinted at the fact which is making the fellowship of Toc H true. It is the fact—part of the experience of the Christian ages—that Our Lord chooses, if we will have it so, to make in us "His homeliest home," He does not ask whether we pay super-tax, whether our "intelligence quotient" is high or low. And, however statisticians may classify us, or arrange us in "curves," he will treat us as though we were only sons. If we will open the door at which He knocks, He will come in, and will sup with us and we with Him. No gulf that we try to bridge compares with the gulf that is thus annihilated. And in face of this, talk about the differences between men becomes "the hooting of owls." But he does ask that we should open the door. "Christianity is an experimental science, and the best answer to one who questions whether it is true is, Try it. But one difference between this and other experimental sciences is that the necessary course of experiment is almost always, in the beginning at least, extremely difficult, painful, and repugnant to nature." (These words sound hard, but they could be used also of "the necessary course of experiment" involved in learning to row, and many people go through with that). Some in Toc H, as elsewhere, are finding, and more will no doubt find, that the difficulty is by no means always confined to the beginning. And these owe a real debt to the fellowship, and are, I am sure, most

grateful for the help and support it gives them constantly. When a man is finally committed, and is thinking of "jibbing" because the load is being increased—as sometimes it is—it helps him mightily to see how other people, sometimes far more deeply initiated than himself, and sometimes the simplest of folk, tackle their jobs, and to mark the spirit in which they do it. But I am not concerned now with those who are definitely committed to the Christian faith, but with those who are still "free" to choose. How are they to be induced to undertake "the necessary course of experiment," which is—the same writer goes on to say—if conducted with full sincerity and patience, sure to be convincing? To get men to undertake this, as I shall try to argue another time, is what Toc H is really trying to do. The fellowship plays a most important part in it; it is the real schoolmaster. It is so much easier to learn to do things if you live in a family which does them simply and naturally. The desire to learn, where it does not exist, is the hardest of all things to impart. That, I suspect, is what makes so many sermons seem useless. The "merit" of Toc H is that it somehow makes most, not quite all, of those who join it discontented if they are merely members. It makes them want really to belong. It is not enough to be on truly friendly terms with people of a sort whom, but for Toc H, you might not meet at all. And it is not enough to carry out steadily and quite cheerfully jobs of service. You want to know why it is that when men of the most diverse sorts live together, or meet together, really as a family, and act as if the things which the Four Points of the Compass enjoin were really natural things for men to do, they do find that in fact they are living together "in joy and peace." (The word "joy" is so often misused that it is a comfort to find Professor McDougall, the psychologist, carefully marking it off from pleasure, which he counts an entirely inferior thing; and quoting with approval a passage in which Coleridge not merely

calls joy "strong music of the soul," but says it "ne'r was given save to the pure, and in their purest hour." I quote this strong language only to say that the word "joy" in this prayer is not to be watered down, and that those who merely find Toc H rather a jolly thing have not yet got anywhere). If having come so far, you go on puzzling as to how you may really belong to Toc H, you may perhaps hit on the fact that "all the law and the prophets" were once said to hang on two great commandments. Of the first Walter Hilton* says this:—"Our Lord said:—Thou shalt love God of all thy heart and all thy soul and all thy might. It is impossible to any man for to fulfil this bidding so fully as it is said, while he lives on earth, and yet nevertheless Our Lord bade us love so; to the intent, as Saint Bernard sayeth, that we should know thereby our feebleness, and then cry for mercy, and we shall have it." The same may be said, I think, of the other great commandment about loving our neighbour as ourself. So this brings us to the position that to accept the Christian religion is to undertake the impossible; and then to be given power, not indeed to achieve it, but to attempt so much as to "have mercy." And I think that when a man has gone so far as that he is within reach of the beginning. Incidentally, he has found out enough of what the fellowship of Toc H means to know why we insist on mixing up all sorts of people. The second great commandment does not really get home to us without a "necessary course of experiment." We may assent to it, but we cannot see, without trying it out a little, that it is a way of stating "a fundamental law of the universe in which we live," that men are so made that they are "members one of another." Our experiment is a little one, but I think it achieves much.

Writing in the Journal in January, I said, in effect, that the fellowship of Toc H was a fellowship in Christ Jesus. We are deliberately trying to build it up of people *naturally* so discordant, so discrepant, that without

* A 14th century English mystic, who wrote *The Scale of Perfection*.

Him the thing would fight itself to pieces. We have burned our boats—not without remembering two lines written by G. K. Chesterton:—"It was the man who burned his ships, Who set the Thames on fire." Without common tastes and interests our fellow-man does not easily hold him to us; but the Christ in him can, and does. Toc H grows and deepens because it is helping men to see more easily—and, I think, more often—the Christ in their fellows. It is no accident that one of the two days in the year which Toc H in London is called on to honour, specially and corporately, is Ascension Day, when we remember—have we not reason?—Our Lord's promise:—"Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world." In the realised truth of that is the heart of the fellowship of Toc H—as of every Christian life.

V. THE MAIN OBJECT OF TOC H.

TOC H exists first and foremost, not for any advantage to its members, not to do particular things or jobs, but to pass on a spirit—the spirit of Christian fellowship and service shown by all ranks during the Great War. Whatever Toc H may do, however big it grows, if that spirit dies, if we cannot pass it on, Toc H is dead—dead at the heart of it—and we have been false to our trust. Or else we have been set, or have set ourselves, to do something which is not practicable.

In the last two papers I have said a little about three of the Four Points of the Compass. For several reasons I propose to leave until later discussion of the last—“to spread the Gospel without preaching it.” If that is not meant seriously, it is, obviously, an outrageous thing to say. If it is, it will be useful to get as many “cross-bearings” as possible before asking what it really means. Also, it is open to anyone to say that however interesting and valuable the statement called the Four Points of the Compass may be, it does not really bind the members of Toc H. And in a formal sense this is quite true. A man joining Toc H to-day is not required to “sign on” to the Four Points, but only to say that he has read them. What he does sign on to is the statement* of the Objects of Toc H in Article IV of the Charter as amended in 1925. And further, the Four Points are not, and were not intended to be, anything more than a supplement to the Main Object, a “further statement of our aims.” In the Introduction I have set out the Main Object in all the forms through which it has passed. All of them declare that

* Introduction, p. vii.

Toc H exists primarily to pass on the spirit of Christian fellowship and service shown in the Great War. The question is whether in any real and serious sense this *can* be done; whether we are hitching our waggon to a star without either the intention or the power to follow where it leads.

I think before we go on we had better sharpen our recollection of what the spirit was that we are to try to maintain and pass on. There is a difference between "not forgetting" and really remembering. I propose to quote a few words from Donald Hankey's "Student in Arms." These are parts of a passage of which his editor, Mr. Strachey, says that he could imagine a great commander repeating the words of General Wolfe and saying that he would rather have written that passage than have won a general action. Donald Hankey is writing of those he calls the "lost sheep," men who had made a thorough mess of their lives, men entirely unrespectable, apparently quite useless, until they "got out." Then

"Their spirits effervesced. Their wit sparkled. Hunger and thirst could not depress them. Rain could not damp them. Cold could not chill them They did not endure hardship, they derided it Never was such a triumph of spirit over matter If they lived amiss, they died gloriously, with a smile for the pain and the dread of it. With a gay heart they gave their greatest gift, with a smile to think that after all they had something to give which was of value They had been lost, but they had found the path which led them home; and when at last they laid their lives at the feet of the good Shepherd, what could they do but smile."

Those were "the lost sheep." But what of the men who had not made a mess of their lives before they joined up, men who quite obviously had real gifts, great or small? What of amazingly gifted people like Donald Hankey himself, and many many others whom we can think of at once?

Lots of people think that the way we look back to the war, our lamps, our ritual, are merely sentimental. They are clear that the world wants not sentiment, but facts, and sometimes hard facts. I think they are right: but I also think the word fact is used very often in a sense quite trivial and wrong. Unless we are as the beasts that perish, the truly interesting facts—and I suspect some of the hardest—must be spiritual facts. Was the “triumph of spirit over matter,” which Donald Hankey brings home to us so clearly, a fact, or was it not? Was not the existence of that spirit, so intense, so widespread, so single-minded, one of the hardest facts about the War? We have revised our opinions since as to many things which we thought facts at the time. Have we revised our opinion of that? If not, then to try—however feebly so it be sincerely—to maintain and pass on that spirit is among the least sentimental of things.

But is it practicable? Circumstances are so utterly different. Notoriously things have always been done in times of war or great stress which simply do not happen at other times. This wonderful spirit—the critics, with complete sincerity, acknowledge how wonderful it was—was provoked, stirred up, called out, by the war. Doubtless, in another frightful crisis, it would appear again, but—

We must admit, at once, I think, that the war called out this spirit. But the really interesting question is, I think, not what evoked the response, but what made it *possible* for an immense number of men, many of them quite ordinary, many of them—on normal standards—much worse than ordinary, to show this spirit, to be as wonderful as quite clearly they were. What sustained it, and them? The widespread “triumph of spirit over matter,” repeated countless times, suggests, I think, to a really impartial mind, that somehow that new energy had been released from somewhere; that a new driving force, of tremendous power, had suddenly found that masses of men, previously quite unamenable to it, un-

adapted to it, had suddenly become "transformed" into its willing servants. That may be fanciful, but the people whose opinions I have just been trying to set out would laugh at me if I said that the electric train I came up in this morning started *because* the guard blew a whistle and the driver moved a lever. A great spiritual fact requires an adequate cause as much as a physical one. I want, if possible, to get somewhere near the basis, the foundation, of "the spirit of Christian fellowship and service shown by all ranks in the Great War."

But in doing that let us take two ideas with us. We want to remember how during the war things were short-circuited and speeded up. Men literally jumped to conclusions, staking everything on them. How quickly did many men, in order to go to the war, break off all that they were doing or had ever hoped to do. How very much more deliberate those very same men would be if under the conditions of to-day the idea of a similar breaking up of their normal lives came into their heads as a thing that ought to be faced. The other idea underlies a remark which the American Admiral Mahon made long before the War, that the real business of *force* in the world is to provide time and space for *ideas* to take root. Behind the horribly brutal facts of the war was, we have seen, a spiritual fact, the existence, widespread among the men who fought, of a spirit of friendship and service and singlemindedness which to this day simply dazes us if we recollect it clearly and face it fairly. This spirit grew in the furnace of war, when all seemed to be dominated by force. Is it really true that a space was being cleared that ideas might take root, deep and wide. They must have been very great ideas, if so terrific a price had to be paid that they might live. In all that turmoil, *was* death really becoming creative?

Now let us stand right back from the War. Professor Simpson, of Edinburgh University, starts the chapter in which he "sums up" a book* he published in 1925 by recalling the legend that Henry Drummond, when a child,

*Landmarks in the Conflict between Science and Religion.

said that if he had been God, he would have made all things red like the inside of a penny trumpet. Starting from this he goes on to point out that the material universe we live in is not any old kind of universe, but a very definite kind, a particular kind. Things happen in it in one sort of way, and *not* in other ways, which might perhaps be just as good, or better. For example—I am paraphrasing with great freedom—grass is green, and not purple or orange or a delicate shade of puce—a colour which many people prefer. The force of attraction between two bodies in the universe—say, the earth and the moon—varies, among other things, as the *squares* of the distance between them. It might have varied as the cube of the distance, but it doesn't. It is agreed that there are "laws" about the way things happen in this material universe, that it is full of hard facts. Men have only gradually been discovering what particular kind it is, how things happen in this way, and *never* in that, finding out the hard facts about it, things which remain facts whether men understand them or not, accept them or not, like them or not. And among these facts are some which are specially important, which are, as it were, master-keys which unlock many doors, which explain what before was quite beyond explanation, and which in the doing of this, verify themselves, prove themselves true. When Isaac Newton discovered the principle of gravitation, he provided men with one of these keys. His laws, "when applied to the heavenly bodies, accounted for all their movements," and explained things which had puzzled men for centuries. But the doors were not unlocked for those who would not use the key. There was no explanation for those who would neither listen nor try the explanation out.

But Professor Simpson does not stop at material things. He goes on to argue that the universe we live in, on its spiritual and moral side, is also not any old kind of universe, but a very particular, special kind; that here too there are laws, hard facts, which remain facts

whether men like them or not, understand them or not, disobey them or not. And he sees among these laws, as among the others, some which are of special importance; which are keys which unlock many doors—to those who will use them; which are explanations which really explain—to those who will listen and try them out. And he sees Our Lord as One who really knew these laws, these hard facts, and was trying to tell us about them—if we would listen—what we need to know. “How often,” said Peter, “shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him?” We all remember the answer. “Forgiveness,” says Professor Simpson, is, according to Our Lord, “to be carried to its extremest length *because* it is both the highest wisdom and of the very nature of God. It is a fundamental attitude, an elemental law of living in this particular world, which a man can never abandon without the most serious consequences to himself.” The law of forgiveness, it would appear, is one of what I have called the hard facts of the world we live in. It is, of course, easier to defy it than it is to defy the hard facts which we call the laws of gravitation. At any rate, it appears to be easier.

In August, 1924, we published in the Journal an article by Alec Paterson, called “Foundations.” It began: “There are two sorts of people *only*—the givers and the getters. The motives of service and acquisition are directly contrary, and are at the root of conduct.” And it ended by saying of the man who has decided to base his life on service that “he will learn that the eternal gifts come only to those who in their turn have given all they had.” Thus he began and ended with the two “hard facts,” which I think specially concern us now:—“He who would be great among you shall be your servant,” and “He who would save his life will lose it.” I just suggest that what the Elder Brethren of Toc H—and very many others—did in the War was to dare to take these hard sayings of Our Lord “at their face value,” to accept them as hard facts, to act as if He meant what He said, and knew what He meant; to take them not as

subjects for argument, or for emotion, but as things to be tried out to the limit. And I think they found them true. It is true that very many of the men who gave their lives for us in the war did not think of what they did in this sort of way, did not acknowledge Our Lord, or know or understand Him at all. But surely obedience matters more than understanding. We cannot always understand. I do not think that any of Donald Hankey's "lost sheep" who truly laid their lives at the feet of the Good Shepherd, found that He failed to understand—or to acknowledge them.

If the foundation, the basis, of the spirit we are to maintain and pass on was, as I think it was, the frank acceptance of the hard facts Our Lord tried to tell us, then we are not likely, I think, to succeed if we build on any other foundation. Even if we are right so far, even if we have discovered the foundation on which we must build, we are brought back to the objection with which we started. Circumstances *are* so different. We must ask also whether, placed as we are, we really can build on this foundation. But I cannot do that now. I can only say that we none of us really know whether it is easier to do one desperately fine thing, or to go on doing steadily a lot of little things that do not seem to matter very much—or to try to do them and fail. And I can just state, and then leave till next month the ideas for which I think the deaths of the Elder Brethren "cleared a space." One is that the supreme reality here and now is spiritual, and that compared with that nothing else matters at all. Donald Hankey's lost sheep smiled at death, but they knew the manner of it, the way they faced, it mattered immensely. And the other idea is that the Christian life is above all a great venture, a thing to be tried out and proved by trying to live it. "Prove all things" was said the faithful Thessalonians, not to the man in the street. If we find that these were the ideas for which the Elder Brethren died, we shall see that the phrase about "death becoming creative" is not just a phrase. For these ideas, grasped and held, make "dead" men live.

VI. THE MAIN OBJECT OF TOC H. II.

THE little ritual of initiation tells us how we try to maintain the "spirit of Christian fellowship and service manifested by all ranks during the Great War." "What first lit this Light?" "*Unselfish sacrifice.*" What alone can maintain it?" "*Unselfish service.*" "What is service?" "*The rent we pay for our room on earth.*" There are people, even in Toc H, who think all this, and especially perhaps the answer to the last question, rather sentimental. I know there are, for I used to be one of those people myself—and our eyes are sharp to see our own mistakes, when other people are kind enough to make them. I know now that the little ritual has a real, and deep, meaning, and I shall hope to make those "responses"—which imply promises—not once but many times. As I go on I think I shall find myself laying more and more stress on "unselfish" in the first two answers, as the really important word. And I shall realise more and more that the third answer reminds us of a fact which in a world numbed and blinded by pessimism it is easy to forget—that, if the Christian faith be true, life is a privilege for which we cannot pay highly enough. "The body is not the prison of the soul, but a servant and instrument placed by God at its disposal; the union of the soul and the body is not a punishment of the soul, but a beneficent link by which the human soul may attain to its perfection."

But I cannot find all the answer I want in the ritual. I know that the prescription works, that the sincere following of the words of the ritual brings about what

we call Toc H. But what many of us, I suspect, want to get at is not that the thing is right because it works, but that the thing is essentially right, and therefore it works. So we must, I think, dig down a little further. And we may not find the answer at once. It was the War which called out the spirit we are trying to maintain and pass on, and circumstances now are so utterly different. Perhaps the greatest difference is this. The background of Talbot House, Properinghe, was a *whole life* of fellowship and service, into which men could, and did, put all that they had and were. Even if we get something of the same spirit into the time we spend in Toc H, into our jobs of service, into parts of our private lives—what of the rest? It is all very well for Alec Paterson to say:—"There are two sorts of people only, the givers and the getters. The motives of service and of acquisition are directly contrary, and are at the root of conduct." It is all very well for him to suggest that it is useless to spend most of our lives serving the motive of acquisition, and to think that we can make up for that by spending a few hours a week under the motive of service. How many people would give a very great deal to feel that service was at the root of their daily work, and cannot feel it—or think that they cannot! "A.P.," after all, we may say, is one of the few. We hear a lot about the difference between the people who have both money, and the power which money gives—and the rest of us. We do not hear so much of a dividing-line which cuts across this and is possibly more important. There are those—they are by no means always rich in this world's goods—who have work into which they can put all, or nearly all, of the best faculties they have, work in which they can *grow*. And there are those whose work, rightly or wrongly, makes little or no appeal to the best that is in them, work in which they may shrink and shrivel up, unless they can find opportunities for growth outside. It is true that many of them do, that they "grow" in a way that ought to surprise some of us

more than it does—but this does not happen always. When we look back, we ought to remember, I think, how much power and energy and capacity the War called out in the most surprising places, what reserves of those things there were to be called out. It was not poverty that I was thinking of a moment ago, though poverty and work which deadens, or at best offers only a material reward, too often go together. But perhaps I can make my point best by quoting some words written of poverty by a Franciscan.* “One cannot move very intimately among the poor in our city slums without becoming aware of a type of character, exquisite in its spiritual beauty, which, like some mountain bloom, thrives only where the ground is stony and the inclines steep, and which would sicken in a richer soil. Poverty is one of the liberties of the children of God; but the world has done its best to destroy that liberty by loading it with conditions which depress the spirit and make for moral and spiritual squalor. The first of these conditions has been the isolation of the poor in their struggle for the necessities of existence; . . . whereas the natural heritage of the poor, as of all human beings, are the broad highways of life with their immediate opportunities for the exercise of the soul’s faculties.” In the war Everyman had those opportunities, with what results we know. The opportunities were not for getting, but for giving—giving in conscious co-operation with others who themselves were giving all they had, giving for a cause they believed to be right and just, and worthy of the best they had to give. And then we had that amazing “triumph of spirit over matter,” that extraordinary uprush of energy from somewhere, which we were thinking of last month. Was the measure of man’s spiritual accomplishment thus enlarged “for the duration of the War only?” Suppose, just suppose, that that energy and power and capacity could come again, that man is so made that *those* are the opportunities he needs if he is to be what he can be.

*The Romanticism of St. Francis—Father Cuthbert, O.S.F.C.

Look at it, for a moment, on a plane which is not the highest. "Any factory which could induce for six months the united and enthusiastic concentration of, say, an amateur football team would produce quite astonishing results." Most people would say that it simply cannot be done. "It happens however that there are many cases where faith must precede the accomplished fact If man had always feared the untried, the ocean would still to-day be deemed unnavigable." Most people must have thought Christopher Columbus a fool when he set sail. But *we* have the amazing facts of the War to look back to and are in search of something even greater than America.

To run into a political or economic discussion would be to provoke controversy. But there is a better reason for not doing it. I do not think that we should find what we are looking for in that way. I just note that when people talk of the industrial revolution they are talking of a fact, however they may regard it, and that I think that some of the greatest revolutions in the world have been carried out little by little by people who had no complete idea of what they were doing. What Mr. W. W. Carlile says* of the banking system seems to me true of greater things:- "We have in the banking system of to-day an elaborate mechanism the general features of which are capable of being copied every day by new nations as they come into line with us in economic progress. Yet we know that there is not one of these features the emergence of which can justly be attributed to the inventive genius of any single individual We seem to be here in the presence of one of those surprising works of the common mind which are full of a still inadequately recognised significance The collective continuous mind seems to have in it something which cannot be accounted for off-hand as the sum of the conscious thoughts and wishes of various individual minds." What concerns us is, not so much the responsibility, or the motives, of any one man, or set of men, as the fact that the industrial

* Monetary Economics.

system, which dominates more or less the lives of all of us, has somehow gone wrong. The common mind through whose working it has evolved has lost hold perhaps of some factor essential to real success, has, quite unintentionally perhaps, left, so to speak, the vitamins out of its dietary. Anyhow, it is a fact—however we may “re-act” to it or propose to deal with it—that there is a great and widespread dissatisfaction with many of its results. Many of the people who see that most of the dull and tiresome things men have to do are clearly necessary, if we are to live, are beginning to wonder whether, in harnessing men to these tasks, we have not somehow contrived to throttle them down as well. “Throttling down” a water-main may do more than reduce the flow; carried far enough it may lead to the bursting of the main. And we have, by analogy, already “a spirit of revolt against a life spent in the performance of one mechanical operation, devoid of interest and requiring little skill.” The spirit of revolt is not new, though this cause of it may be. Some one has just reminded me that the heart of Zacchaeus must have been full of revolt—until he took the trouble to see Our Lord and was made welcome.

I set out last month the two ideas for which I suggest that the deaths of the Elder Brethren “cleared a space.” Those ideas were once widespread in the world. However ignorant and incompetent and superstitious people were, they did know once that life was not “an aimless walk, but a journey,” to a definite end; that the supreme reality was spiritual—in short, that man can neither be rightly understood nor rightly handled except on the basis that his *prime* interests are not material things at all. And, if anyone doubts whether the sense of adventure once ran through great tracts of Christian life, let him read of St. Francis and the early Franciscans, and try to realise why they desired to “embrace poverty”—and what sort of poverty they desired to embrace. “As it is true that the rich man must be poor in spirit in

order to be Christ's disciple, so it is equally true that the poor man must be rich in spirit even in regard to the earth, if he is to be like Christ." "Spiritual possession is obtained when mind and heart are enlarged in their intercourse with the external world, and a man takes to himself the truth and beauty and pathos which lie at the heart of things. This, after all, is the deepest and most enduring possession in the world's life which man is capable of; it is the one sort of possession which really enlarges a man's spirit and makes him more a man." With the memory of what men did in the war in our minds, can we say that it is quite impossible that *this* may be the sort of possession on which a man's heart is really set? Of course he does not always say that, or behave as if that was what he meant. But we are thinking of *real* needs, and what are we that we should judge."

We published in the Toc H Journal in November, 1924, a little paper by one of the Elder Brethren. "It is extra-ordinary," wrote Archie Turner, "how all this business (of the war) makes one realise the value of blokes. To think of things is mouldier and mouldier, but to think of blokes is continually reviving If only there could get about an idea that it would be a good thing to be poor in things and to excel in blokage." Set against that the words I have quoted from Father Cuthbert. Grasp and hold the fact—lots of people just know it—that very many indeed of the men who lit the lamps we are to maintain had lived most of their lives under "conditions which depress the spirit and make for moral and spiritual squalor." Stop just for a moment and try to *see* what living under those conditions without hope of respite really means; and bring sharp up against that the confident assertion of the Scottish Shorter Catechism that "man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him for ever."

We have thought specially of Toc H as a "human zoo," and of our trying to break down water-tight compartments which separate men. But we must try to break down

also water-tight compartments between the ideas by which men live—ideas which are at the root of conduct—and we must begin with ourselves. (That, incidentally, is why in Toc H we do not spend time passing resolutions about other people's business.) If what the Shorter Catechism says is true for two hours on Sunday it is true *all* the time. And other things, many of which are also true but quite secondary, if this really is the truth, have to be fitted in and adjusted until they find their proper places. And this truth must somehow become the master-key to the problems of our own lives, and of our relations with other people. The very difficulty of it is a challenge to adventure. The Elder Brethren would laugh, I am sure, at the idea that we could maintain their spirit merely by doing easy and pleasant things. Truly it is no easy task for any of us to unify our lives, to get one simple purpose running through all of them, "a positive and deliberate loyalty to the truth by which one lives." The real point, as we shall see, of the little jobs which Toc H does is that in them and in the life of the family that loyalty is being learned.

When I said that Toc H seemed to me "not a society of fractions of people, of abstractions from people," but of whole men, I was not trying to make a phrase. Man can be divided, or can divide himself, into fractions, or set up water-tight compartments between parts of his life. He can be one man at his work, another in his leisure, and another still in the odd moments he may give to cultivating his soul—if he realises that he has one, or on the off-chance. But you and I must not go on like that, for it is an essential part of the business of Toc H to raise up spiritual children to our dead. And they clearly were whole men, their lives unified by one simple purpose, which involved their denying themselves, and that "giving of all for all" which Mrs. Herman says, "is the condition of every great and serious business."

As I feared, I have not yet reached the answer I have been looking for. But perhaps we have come some way.

I feel sure that there lies waiting for us work much greater than we even dream of now. But I am more sure that we are not yet ready to attempt it. One of the members of our Executive has driven home to many of us the idea of Toc H as a unifying force. I agree whole-heartedly, but I think that a deal of unifying has first to be done in us. Let me quote Mrs. Herman again. She is writing of the great ascetic saints. "Their lives were the simple outcome of that irreducible logic of theirs. They had seen Jesus! And once a soul has seen Jesus, and dares to abide by its vision, life is a very simple matter, and has all the hardness and difficulty of simple things." There may be great tasks for Toc H in days to come. Our most pressing job here and now is, I am sure, to realise the value of blokes, to help them to realise their own value. And we cannot do it unless we know Him, "who loved us and gave Himself for us."

VII. THE MAIN OBJECT OF TOC H. III.

IN the war men did not chalk on their railway carriages, "To God knows where," but, "To Berlin." It mattered little that many of them knew that they would never get there. They knew what they were driving at, and man seems to be so made that he *must* know that, if he is to be what he can be. That he *can* be something much greater than he frequently is, is a fact amazingly easy to forget. How much greater, and in how many cases—greater in spiritual achievement, in the things that make a man—was taught by the war to every one of us who is capable of learning anything. But there are different sorts of learning, as there are different sorts of fact. If I hold my finger in a gas-jet long enough, it is a waste of time for anyone to teach me that fire burns. But the supreme fact that God is Love, I must learn afresh every day, if I am to hold it. To hold any spiritual fact requires, I think, constant recollection, and the Elder Brethren, and their spirit, will be real to us only if we steadfastly remember it, and them. And, if we remember, I think we shall refuse to believe that war alone can draw out man's reserve capacity, however difficult the drawing-out of it may be. "Will the day ever dawn," says Maurice Maeterlinck, plaintively, "when we shall be what we are?" Mrs. Herman, with surer hope, tells us that "in every man there is a life waiting to be born." And here is someone else speaking. "It is true, in a sense, that the child is the man; but it is also true that he is not the man, and that his sole business, his whole life through, is to become the man. A developing being is what it can

become (Man's) ideals of knowledge which will satisfy, and of conduct which fulfils his aims and satisfies his spirit, transcends his achievements and are beyond his reach. And yet, these ideals, things which ought to be and are not, are the deepest realities within him." In the war the day dawned for very many a man when he could be what, in the deepest and truest sense, he was. The problem is whether that sort thing can go on.

Since I wrote last month I have been reading again a book—I have just quoted from it—which I had not looked at since before the war. It is a set of lectures delivered before the University of Sydney by the late Professor Henry Jones, of Glasgow University. He sets out plainly what seems to me the root of the pessimism which poisons so many men's lives. "The variety and magnitude of the interests of modern life and their violent collisions; the change in the structure of society which is one of the consequences of the organisation of men in pursuit of these inconsistent interests; the demand which the change makes for a more adequate intellectual, moral and political response if the new circumstances are to be comprehended and controlled; the emancipation of men's minds from the bonds of dogmatic authority, whether secular or sacred, and the obsolescence of the religious and political creeds, have co-operated to make the discrepancies of experience undeniably evident to all reflective men." He is stating the position, as he sees it, dispassionately. Life had become, he thinks, in the early days of the twentieth century, immensely more difficult for everyone who really tried to face it. He is far from suggesting that man is blameless. "At the worst," he says, "his life is mean, and sinful and wretched, and very short—his better purpose abandoned, his aspirations stifled, and the light of his soul well nigh gone out." But he sees too that progress, whether material or intellectual, brings new and greater difficulties, that moral progress means larger responsibilities and harder duties. And he sums

it all up thus:—"The question of the rectitude and sanity of the whole order of reality has been raised, and there remain but two alternatives—hope which cannot despair, and despair which cannot hope." Put more bluntly, man had advanced amazingly in knowledge of all sorts, especially in knowledge which gave power over material things, while spiritually his advance had at the best been slow. And in the result he was up against a mass of problems which were driving him often reluctantly, and sometimes unconsciously, towards a great choice. He was being driven to look in a new way at one of the sayings of Our Lord—"Man (that is, Every-man) shall not live by bread alone" (by material things alone, however many and however complicated, or by knowledge alone, however varied and extended). That could no longer be regarded as merely a saying of a great teacher from which some moral lesson might be extracted. It must be faced as a hypothesis, or rather part of a hypothesis, about the universe, a hard fact, if it is true, about the world we have to live in. I said that I believed that the basis, the foundation, of the spirit that we are to maintain and to pass on was that men in the war dared to take some of the hardest sayings of Our Lord—part of His hypothesis about the universe—and to try them out to the limit. Unless Professor Jones was exaggerating violently, we have come to a point where other theories have failed us, where our ideas of the universe become "a bottomless quagmire, and there is no safe footing anywhere, and we are being steadily driven to try out the whole hypothesis of the Carpenter of Nazareth, not always because we want to, but because, if He has not the words of eternal life, we cannot find them anywhere. Call it, if you will, just a hypothesis that except we become as little children, we shall in no wise enter into the Kingdom of God. Do we peril our intellectual honesty any more by really trying it out as a hypothesis than if we try out afresh the hypothesis of gravitation? And what does Professor Jones say

of the hypotheses of science? He describes them as the surest knowledge that we have, as becoming "surer still as they bring fact after fact within their sweep," and lodge those various facts in a system which stands because the different elements of it support and balance one another. And he says expressly that the hypothesis of Jesus of Nazareth is in his conviction the sanest hypothesis which has yet been discovered, and "that the experience of mankind is but a gradual corroboration of its truth." And there is another kind of experience to that of which he is thinking. Obviously, if Our Lord's hypothesis *is* true, it *must* be open to Everyman to try it out for himself. There *must* be a way in which the most unlettered peasant and the least talented of men can reach a certainty on which he can rest as surely as Professor Jones. Now, as it happens, a part of the hypothesis of Jesus of Nazareth about the nature of God is expressed in these words:—"If a man love me, he will keep my word; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." And that, I think, is the surest way for any man to try who would know where he is going, and why he must do the things that he must do.

Let us think again of Donald Hankey, and this time of something his editor, Mr. Strachey, wrote about him. "To see God, to realise God, must be the supreme happiness, and something of this he possessed because he was pure in heart. By 'pure in heart' who can doubt that Our Lord meant single-minded—the man who has one clear purpose, who is not, like so many of us, of mixed purposes? Most of us in the abstract want to do right, but we want to do it in such a way that it will dovetail in nicely with the mosaic of our lives, with our worldly or selfish or purely utilitarian aims. We want to mix a little or a good deal of this with our 'other-worldliness.' Only the man who truly is 'pure of heart' is free from this taint of mixed motives. His one desire is the seeing of the Good and following it (Donald Hankey) did

not seek the glory of arms, though he obtained it. Still less did he seek the glory of letters, though it is plain for all to see that it was his. He did seek the glory of God, and it is his. He is now God's soldier." And then this:—"He wanted the light and the liberty he sought, not for the selfish cultivation of his own soul, but only that he might bring help and freedom to those that sit in darkness." A man, if he is to be what he *can* be, wants something more, it would appear, than to know where he is going; his life must be unified, he must be single-minded, and he must be free. But the freedom we really want is, I suspect—though we none of us always realise it—none other than the only freedom which the Elder Brethren sought for themselves. Professor Jones would have called it "the freedom of perfect service." He says expressly that this, and this alone, ought to be the conscious purpose of a really civilised state. He does not disguise the difficulty of it. Man, as he begins, he says, "is of the earth earthy, steeped in sense, and impulse is his only law." But he is meant to wear on his brow the crown of spirit, to reign as king over his own impulses, and to subject the world to obedience. To the natural man, the crown of spirit is, indeed, a crown of thorns, worn on the way to death. If he has not to destroy his natural impulses by ascetic ways of life, he has to convert them into vehicles and instruments of purposes which are spiritual—which is still more difficult. "Will the day ever dawn when we shall be what we are?" Perhaps there is no answer but St. Paul's—when we have attained "to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." Merely to think that makes us gasp. But, if the "hypothesis" we are considering is the truth, that appears to be what man was *meant* to attain to.

Professor Jones, we have seen, is quite clear that the supreme reality, here and now, is spiritual. He is equally clear that man's whole life must be unified, that the highest motives must dominate it *all*. He is certain that the first step is to recognise clearly that our lives *need*

unifying. And he has no doubt about the difficulty of this. "The deep slumber of sense has to be broken, if the wants of man's rational and spiritual nature are to be satisfied. We need "the sting that bids not stand, nor sit, but go." "He hath filled the hungry with good things, but the rich he hath sent empty away." (If we are to embark on this venture with any hope of success, we must first, it seems, be *hungry* for good things). And there is a special difficulty for us which we must recognise and face. Since the war we have come back into a world which economic motives seem to master and rule. "There is no sphere," says Professor Jones, "where egoistic conditions are more dominant, or where mutual resistance and competition are more obviously the law than in the sphere of economics. For it is the nature of material as distinct from spiritual goods that they cannot be distributed without lessening everyone's share"—a statement which, if true, gives all questions of redistribution of wealth and the like, however important these questions are, a place among secondary things. Now in the war economic considerations were driven in fact, in many cases, into a secondary place, and then we had what Professor Jones considers "the absolute necessity of the highly-organised, many functioned State of the future"—we had "the consciousness of freedom and brotherhood and free devotion to the common welfare." Was that merely a coincidence?

One of our members, now a Bishop, founded before the Armistice a society which he called the League of Spiritual War. Its members, those of them who would, were later on transferred to Toc H. The real reinforcement we received in this case was not so much the men as the idea, which ought not to be allowed to die. For there is a spiritual war—war in which men may win "hope that cannot despair" or set their feet steadfastly towards "despair that cannot hope." And however much we in Toc H may be divided, and may continue to be divided, on political and economic issues, we are being committed

more and more, by our very membership, to the position that as "the whole structure of things is spiritual," man's life must at long last be so ordered that somehow—to quote Professor Jones once more—"duty is recognised as good, and obligation as a privilege and opportunity, and service itself as its own reward," and "freedom from outer constraint" may be won because "the outer law and the inner desire concur," so that a man may say truly, of his ordinary life, "I will walk at liberty, for I seek Thy precepts." The difficulty of getting the thing done is not the point now. It is, I suspect, in any case far smaller than most people think. The ingenuity of the people who control the industrial system, and their capacity for getting the results they want—when the resistance of the human factor is not excessive—are simply immense. The real difficulty is not to get the thing done, but to get people to see that it *wants* to be done—which means, in too many cases—we men are made like that—to be brought to see that nothing else will really work. The point at the moment is "to get an idea about" that it might be good to excel in "blokage," even if that meant, which it probably would *not* mean, to be "poor in things"—to get an idea about that what above all things need to be preserved and developed are what Professor Jones calls "the greatest of all productive forces, namely, human qualities." I tried to illustrate these remarks by a note in the Journal on some work done by one of our American members, Robert B. Wolf. One of the interesting facts about his results was that they did not follow from applying any preconceived theory, but from being forced to introduce modern "efficiency methods" under conditions which expressly prevented the giving to the men any financial incentive to produce better results. And the results, the fact that the men, under the new arrangements, did not only more work, and enjoyed doing it, drove Robert Wolf, in his painstaking search for an explanation, rather a long way. He was forced to the conclusion that he and those working with him had somehow stumbled on to methods

which released a vast amount of energy and evoked an interest which had been there, so to speak, all the time—but had not been called out by the old methods. He was convinced that man, Everyman, even the “unskilled” labourer, even what is called the “high-grade moron,” has creative faculties, and must, if he is to be what he can be, have opportunities for their exercise in his daily work, even under modern conditions of factory production; that while he wants good wages, he wants these opportunities *more* than wages; and that the effect of having these opportunities, on the whole of his life outside the factory, is simply immense. It was no laboratory experiment; the results emerged in the working of a considerable plant, run frankly as a commercial proposition. The results were simply “the united and enthusiastic concentration of an amateur football team”—in the apparently prosaic and “soul-deadening” business of the manufacture of paper-pulp. And the men had the freedom they wanted—freedom to put into the jobs by which they earned their daily bread, their brains, their constructiveness, their natural desire to excel, their sense of humour, their delight in a piece of work well done, and above all, perhaps, their sense of being integral parts of a whole great team which together had a job to do into which each man could gladly put his best.

Let me call on Professor Jones once more. He is writing now of the moral life, the life which, I believe, Everyman, in his deepest heart, *wants* to live, which, if God was made man for us all, he is meant to live. “It is at once obedience and autonomy; obedience which never questions nor demurs, and which is at the same time the joyous expression of the heart’s own desire. . . . The ideal, the divine, the good, is that which works in the moral process, and incites its activities. It is, in the language of religion, the operative indwelling of the Most High; necessity appears as liberty, the divine behest as joyous aspiration. It is the best that the mind of man can imagine or his heart desire, and that which gives

worth to all else. The good that is eternal becomes the growing motive of his life; the mortal puts on immortality; God appears in the flesh, and brings man back to Himself, *freely*, by perfect acquiescence and joyful participation in His ends. 'My meat and drink is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to finish his work.' Deprived of the opportunity of obedience, man is deprived of all. *His ideals are his life.*"

So the answer of the ritual, "unselfish service," is not right *because* it works. It is right, I am sure, because one of the deepest laws of the world we really live in is that perfect service is perfect freedom. But we shall none of us understand it really if we think only of the law. We must think also, if we are to understand, of Him who tried to teach it us, and strive that his image may begin to be formed in us. If that is to happen, "we must look at Him often, and look at Him long; for the more we look at Him the more we shall love Him, and the more we love Him, the more we shall try in every way we can to be like Him."

VIII. THE MAIN OBJECT OF TOC H. IV.

SOME of my friends in Toc H—I have several—have suggested that in the story of the rise of chivalry, in the story of the early Franciscans, it ought to be possible to find some light on the questions we are considering. I think that that is true, but there is a difficulty at the outset. I turned up the other day quite by accident a book* written by the late Mr. W. H. Lecky. He claimed, with full confidence, that the results of the spread of rationalism may justly be regarded as one of the triumphs of civilisation. And then, rather sadly as it seems to me, he ended his book with these words:—"But, when we look back to the cheerful alacrity with which men, in former ages, sacrificed all their intellectual and material interests to what they believed to be right, and when we realise the unclouded assurance which was their reward, it is impossible to deny that we have lost something in our progress." (It is possible, I think, to put things too delicately. He might almost have said that men were beginning to suspect that they had "poured out the baby with the bath-water." That, however, is not the point at the moment). These words of Mr. Lecky suggest the difficulty I have hinted at. Between the mediæval and the modern point of view there is a difference which is more than serious, and which cannot be ignored if we are to look back to the Middle Ages with any profit.

I am not using the phrase "point of view" in a casual sense, as I might speak of the point of view from which I regard the Boat-race. The difference here concerns

*The Rise and Spread of Rationalism in Europe.

things which lie *behind* men's thoughts and actions, which are "at the root of conduct"—fundamental ideas, ideals, principles, standards. Some one has shrewdly pointed out that the most fundamental standards of all are those which "determine" what can be regarded as fact, what can be believed "to be true." That is the kernel of the difference between the mediæval and the modern points of view. The beliefs which matter most are not those we acknowledge or assent to, but those which *pervade* our lives—so that, however much we try, as we often do, to forget them and get rid of them, they always come back, at times come back and take us by the throat. In that sort of sense, I think, men in the Middle Ages, whatever their behaviour might be, believed in heaven and hell and death and judgment, believed that the supreme reality, here and now, is spiritual. This kind of belief in these things can hardly be said to be part of the modern point of view, in the sense in which I have used those words.

But the difference goes beyond personal beliefs. It concerns also the whole idea of human society and the relations of men to one another. F. R. Barry, in the book I quoted before, remarks that "Christianity denies that civilisation can be built upon any merely natural foundation . . . because the power of living together is something which only the spirit of God makes possible." And, recognising that "man has come to be what he is, and will grow up to what he can become, only in and through a social life," he rejects as wrong any idea that society can be regarded as a collection of individuals—isolated, self-contained units—who live together on terms for reasons of practical convenience. All this merely brings out the force of St. Paul's statement:- "Ye are members one of another and of Christ." Man is so made that he cannot be truly himself, without his fellow or without God. These ideas—or these theories, if you like—were in the Middle Ages declared and driven home to men's minds by the position of the Church; they pervaded men's lives. I do

not think that that is true to-day. But I think it is true that very many men to-day, in different ways and by different methods, are trying to recapture and declare and drive home these very same ideas. And I think Toc H is trying, in its little way, to do this. If the Main Resolution* of its Central Council does not declare its conviction that the supreme reality, here and now, is spiritual, I do not know what any words mean. And the whole life of the family is steadily teaching us that we are "members one of another, and of Christ." So I think, after all, that we may look back, not without hope of understanding them, to those people in the Middle Ages who understood, supremely, that the Christian life is a life of adventure.

Here is something of what J. A. Symonds has to say† of the rise of chivalry:-

"Regarding chivalry, not as an actual fact of history, but as a spiritual force, tending to take form and substance in the world at a particular period, we find that its very essence was enthusiasm of an unselfish kind. The true knight gave up all thought of himself. At the moment of investiture he swore to renounce the pursuit of material gain; to do nobly for the mere love of nobleness; to be generous of his goods; to be courteous to the vanquished; to redress wrongs; to draw his sword in no quarrel but a just one; to respect oaths; to keep his word; and, above all things, to protect the helpless and to serve women. The investiture of a knight was no less truly a consecration to high unselfish aims for life than was the ordination of a priest. In the enthusiasm which inspired the knight, two main, and at first sight very different, influences mingled—the first was zeal for faith, the other zeal for love God was the ultimate object of the adoration of the chivalrous lover; but the lady stood between his soul and God as the visible image and perpetual reminder of the heaven to which he ardently aspired . . . The state of feeling generated by this love was called by the Provencals *Joie*.

* Introduction p. vii.

† Introduction to Dante.

The word is curiously significant of the ecstasy which filled the heart of the true lover with delight, and made him feel in his exalted mood capable of almost more than mortal deeds. This *Joie* was less an emotion than a permanent state of feeling."

Before we go on let us set up against that another quotation* :—

"Chivalry was undoubtedly the most virile product of the romantic movement of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries . . . To it we owe the revival of the sense of man's dignity as dependent upon his self-inherent qualities, and of personal responsibility as attaching to strength and liberty It was this spirit in its purest form which St. Francis embedded into the conscious life of the Church. It governed his religious life as it had attracted his youthful ambition. To his vision the Gospel presented itself primarily as a divine romance in which was set forth that law and liberty of the personal spirit which secular chivalry aspired to but even at its best only imperfectly achieved. In this evangelical romance Jesus Christ was the Restorer of the world's joy. But whereas in secular romance joy was always elusive, in the Gospel it became a permanent possession to those who followed Jesus Christ in His sublime adventure for the world's redemption, and in His vast love for God and man. The Christ-life therefore was the ideal form and law by which men attain to that joyous realisation of self which is the ambition of the romantic spirit."

I leave those passages to speak for themselves, and pass on to an idea which is less irrelevant than may appear at first sight.

In June I quoted from Mr. W. W. Carlile a passage in which he suggested that the banking system was one of the surprising works of the modern mind. I did that in order to hint that perhaps the industrial system was something of the same sort—that it had grown, had happened, and not happened quite right; possibly because the vitamins had been left out of the dietary. Now, on

*The Romanticism of St. Francis—Father Cuthbert, O.S.F.C.

the next page of his book,* Mr. Carlile makes these rather odd remarks:—"No doubt money is the root of very much that is evil in the world, but so, for that matter is sex. Both money and sex however, belong to the very principle of life in humanity and in civilisation. What a victory, as Nietzsche says, was 'the spiritualisation of the sensuous,' the conquest effected by romantic love of the position it now holds in the thoughts of the men and women of the western world." Then he goes on to suggest that something of the same sort may some day be done for money. If for money, why not for all the things which money stands for and "circulates," for the whole system of industry? Perhaps the "surprising works of the common mind" must, like the individual man's natural impulses, be converted into "the vehicles and instruments of spiritual purposes." Perhaps in a truly Christianised State it might be as rare for a man to work merely in order to earn his daily bread as for a man to marry merely in order to have legitimate children.

I have quoted Mr. Symonds to make alive to us the phrase which Mr. Carlile quotes from Nietzsche. To realise what "the spiritualisation of the sensuous" means we want to think quietly what man can do, and often does do, in this department of life. Then we need to grip and hold the absolute necessity of the victory, and of keeping the ground which it won. A very moderate study, if it is dispassionate, and is based on the fact that man is a living soul, will convince any sane person that human beings dare not live in this matter anywhere near the animal level. For they just cannot stop there. If they cannot rise clean above the animal level, they tend to go far below it. I have lived for years in the company of camels, and I do not idealise animals unduly. And I have spent a large part of my life in business arising out of crime, much of it serious, some of it savage almost beyond belief. It was the most loathsome criminal I have ever known who taught me a new respect for the severity of the strict Christian view of all iniquity of this sort. His

*Monetary Economics.

crime was not fully revealed in the press—it could not be—nor could the whole story of his life be told. But the little that was told made an Oriental city gasp, and demand wildly that the law must make such things impossible. It was no idle curiosity which took me to see this wretched creature on the night before he was hanged. I was one of a group of matter-of-fact people required after a hard day's work to spend a long evening visiting a jail. I know that the men with me felt, as I did, that in the condemned cell was no *man*, but a *thing* radiating foulness and malignancy almost unbearably. It is this experience which, above all else, makes me realise the greatness of the victory which chivalry won, turning some of the hardest commandments literally into the “glorious liberties of the children of God.”

How was it done? The words I have quoted from Father Cuthbert serve, I think, to answer this. But it is put more neatly in a sonnet by one of the Italian poets of chivalry, Guittone of Arezzo*:-

And, O, inspire in me that holy love
Which leads the soul back to its origin,
Till of all other love the link do fail.
This water only can this fire reprove—
Only such care suffice for such-like sin;
As nail from out a plank is struck by nail.

The low passion must be driven out by a high passion, the base desire by the love which, in Dante's phrase, “withdraws my eyes from all vile things.” And it is driven out not easily but hardly.

Mr. Carlyle suggested that something analogous to the “spiritualisation of the sensuous” might someday be done for money—and I ventured to give his idea a wider application. It does seem to be the most urgent, the most crying, need of our time. It is admitted on all hands—no Government escapes the “reproach” of “socialistic” legislation—that the principles which lie beneath the modern point of view cannot be left to operate freely by themselves. The real issue—ultimately the only practical issue—is what principles are to govern the industrial rela-

* Mr. Symonds quotes it, using Rosetti's translation.

tions of men. The real war is a spiritual war; and the real dividing-line is not the dividing-line of political party, or of "class." The controversy turns in the end on "what can be regarded as fact, what can be believed to be true" about man's nature and his capacity and his end. Given a real agreement on principles, I can imagine none of the great "practical" problems which oppress us so heavily presenting more than an interesting exercise to the able men engaged in the conflicts on both sides.

If men were to be "saved" by legislation and negotiation, if these were primary, instead of secondary, things, however important, surely Our Lord would have taught us to legislate and to negotiate, as well as to pray. There were political and social problems in Judæa in His day which were clamouring for solution. But he turned away from them all, and it was largely because of this that the end came as it did. He would not be the practical Messiah who would save his people from the practical evils which oppressed them. He turned away "to exhibit instead the triumph of spiritual force over material force—courage conquering pain, faith conquering utter darkness, perfect integrity triumphing over absolute catastrophe, perfect love over complete rejection." If that was the way, if we really and truly believe that He is the way—or are prepared to try that out as a hypothesis—we must see that the only method which is really "practicable" is on the spiritual plane. And we must not be afraid to say, trying to live up to what we say, that it is love, and love alone, which can bring light on our industrial conflicts. For where love is, there is God, and it is God that Everyman wants, and not your nostrum or mine. There really is our task, to live by this idea, to get this idea about. It is not enough to acknowledge that "man does not live by bread alone." and that no man "standeth or falleth by himself alone." The ideas behind these words must *pervade* our lives. "There is sometimes a lie of act implied in our whole life, a practical denial of our faith." Much of the world

we have to live in is based on principles which practically deny these two ideas. But love asserts them, and love must drive out the contrary principles. Only Love can "conquer Hate," and that not easily but hardly, "as nail from out a plank is struck by nail."

We think of Toc H as The House that Love Built. We must not think of it as built for ourselves; but as a little thing which Love is trying to use, if we will let Him, in His task of building Everyman's Home. It is because He is trying, we believe, to use it, and it is only in so far as He can use it, that its Main Object is really practicable. So we must not be discouraged by thinking how little we can do. If we are doing all we can, "we are integral to a mighty plan." If we are impatient, let us think of these words of Professor Henry Jones:—"Great men appear in great ages, and are the creatures of what they create. They come in the fulness of time, their messengers sent before their face, into a world which is waiting for them . . . (The) base (of the greatest of them) is on the table-land of some great public emotion." Are we so great, you and I, that we cannot be content to help to the limit of our powers, trying to prepare the "fulness of time"? And if we are oppressed, as many of us often are, and more will be, by "the sense that we are in a wounded world, a world that seems wounded to death," do let us remember that "as the peace our Lord promised is rooted in His forgiveness and in His service, so it is rooted in the memory of His wounds." Our job surely is to fight for what we see clearly to be right, and against what we see clearly to be wrong, to strive steadily to be as certain as we can that we are really following in His steps, and not merely fancying that we are—and to remember that "there are no wounds so grievous as those in which He triumphed over death—He "whose Kingdom shall have no end."*

We cannot always prevent a sense of oppression from stealing over us. But we must not yield to it, or let it hold us, if we are humbly trying to "follow Jesus Christ

*Note.—For many of the phrases in this and the last paragraph, and for much else, I am indebted to Father Andrew, S.D.C.

in His sublime adventure." The early Romans reckoned it the worst of crimes to despair of the republic. It is surely a greater fault for us to act as though we believed "that God had failed." And, faults apart, if Love has really touched us, if He is making us his own, what livery shall our souls wear? The knights of chivalry, the early Franciscans, the Elder Brethren would alike, I think, bid us wear that "joyaltie of mind"—no passing emotion, but a permanent state of feeling—which was the reflection of their "cheerful alacrity." We shall not do it unless—having faced the facts, as they did—we hold firmly the truth that our Lord *is* conquering, that spirit *is* triumphing over matter, that perfect Love *is* casting out fear—that fruitful mother of many evils.

IX. THE METHOD OF TOC H.

ALL up and down these little papers I have been suggesting what I am sure is true, that Toc H is not merely a Christian family, but a Christianising Society, that its business is to help to make men Christians. I do not propose to argue this out. It seems to me perfectly clear, whether we look at the origins, or at the documents in which Toc H tries to explain its aims, or at the life it lives, when it is really succeeding. What I want to do now is to take up a remark I made, and left over, in January. I wrote then:- "The originality of Toc H lies in the recapturing of a very old 'secret,' and in linking it with the finest tradition of friendship and service, and the most poignant experiences, of the War."

First two preliminary points, one trivial, the other very much the reverse. It may seem strange to speak of the "method" of a thing so spontaneous and so light-hearted as Toc H. I am not, however, thinking of anything formal or systematic. We know that Toc H sometimes makes good, and sometimes does not. All that I mean by its method, and this happens to be the original meaning of the word, is the way along which it works when in fact it is succeeding. Panthers, I am sure, dislike red-tape quite as much as we do. But even panthers go to and fro upon their lawful, and unlawful, occasions on perfectly definite methods.

Someone told me once that he objected strongly to the Four Points of the Compass being in any way officially endorsed by Toc H, on the ground that the Fourth Point "begged the question." I fear I annoyed him by answering "Why, of course it does." A Christianising Society

cannot free itself from the limitations—if I may call them so—which are attached to Christianity itself. If the Christian faith is not—and it manifestly claims that it is not—an ordinary branch of knowledge, it cannot properly be argued about as if it were. I suppose the Catechisms of the Churches may reasonably be regarded as declaring what they set out to teach. I have just turned up the Catechisms of three quite different Churches. None of them say :—here are certain propositions, and here are the arguments which ought to make you, as a reasonable man, accept these propositions as true. On the contrary, they all *demand* belief straight off, at the very start, and they all agree that the faith which they require is something which we have not got of ourselves. One of them calls it a saving grace which we receive ; another a supernatural gift. And a Canon of St. Paul's, in a well-known commentary on the Church Catechism, says :—“ In asking us to believe, and in exacting a promise from our godparents that we should believe, the Church makes a great assumption, namely that there is a region of things invisible which can be brought into sight, and of things unknowable by ordinary methods which can be known.” It is not my business to attempt to discuss these high matters. My concern is only to suggest why Toc H in setting out its aims cannot help doing what my friend called “ begging the question.” But I may be permitted two quotations, and one word of comment. “ This Faith appeals to the verification of experience. When much time has been spent at the bottom of the mountain arguing for and against the possibility of a glorious view from the summit, Faith says as the ultimate appeal, come and see. Climb the mountain, fulfil the conditions which are imposed, and then, “ If any man will do His Will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God ” And this (I have had to shorten it) :—“ A man who first gets the Faith is as one groping in the dark. He finds himself in a new world and everything is strange to him. He knows that he has got home, but he is in a very

distant country. He naturally turns to prayer. He had perhaps tried to pray before, but his prayer was uneasy, restless, unsatisfying. Now prayer is more peaceful, and God is nearer to him. He has grasped God by a new sort of act; he has risen out of himself, he is breathing a new and rarer atmosphere. Prayer now is not the balancing of opposing considerations, it is the concentration of all his mental and moral powers on One whom he recognises as his only true friend." The whole future of Toc H seems to me to depend on those who will make the great adventure, who will climb the mountain, fulfilling the conditions which are imposed—how hard soever they may be—who have found all that their hearts desired and bear the proofs of it in their lives. And every member has to make some venture, however small, if he is to arrive at any real understanding of the thing he has joined.

The essence of the method of Toc H could hardly be set out more clearly than it was in a report which George MacLeod* wrote a short time ago for the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. Here is an extract from it:—

The real justification for the Toc H method in Scotland is the disappearance of the Shorter Catechism as a household book. Thirty and forty years ago men were brought up with the tremendous First Question and Answer ringing in their ears. At least they knew OF their duty to God; from it there issued, in many cases, their duty to their fellow-men. The youth, that is the problem of to-day, has been given no fundamental basis at all; his mind, regarding the meaning of life, is a chaotic jumble. But the youth to-day does understand words like "Fellowship" and "Service"—he knows a good deal about his duty to his fellow men. The Toc H method is to take him where he is, and to let him experience in practice the possibilities and difficulties of these things. From the experience there does emerge a re-awakened interest in First Causes, which it is the business of the padre in the group to develop and satisfy. It is a method that requires patience, but the results are permanent. If the method is to be given a fair chance, however, the experiment must be on truly Christian lines—that is, the service demanded must from the start have in it the element of a real challenge; the fellowship must have in it the element of risk.

* The Rev. G. F. MacLeod, M.C., St. Cuthbert's, Edinburgh.

I agree in this entirely. When I wrote on the Four Points of the Compass in March and April, I tried to show that challenge and risk are to be found, and must always be found, in the service of Toc H, and in its fellowship. But there is one thing more which is essential to the method. George MacLeod does not mention it, but I know that he agrees. I said before that the method of Toc H is set out in the prayer* we use For All Members of Toc H. I think that wherever Toc H is succeeding, it is not merely saying this prayer, but trying to live it, *and* to pray about it, even if sometimes, if I may say it, some of its members are praying "without prejudice." It will be worth while I think to go through this prayer with a little care, and see whether there is any sense in what I have said.

"O God, who hast so wonderfully made Toc H." It begins, as prayer must, with the thought of God Himself; and especially with the thought that this thing, which we love, or are learning to love, is His "show," that He has made it—all of it that has any good in it. "And set men in it to see their duty as Thy will." Toc H exists, not for us, or for any purpose of ours, but that in it we may, one by one, and all together, learn to accept His standards, His purpose. "Teach us to live together in love and joy and peace." That, we feel sure, is how He would have us live together, in the spirit of a family; and we own simply, and with truth, that we cannot do it without Him. "To check all bitterness, to disown discouragement, to practise thanksgiving, and to leap with joy to any task for others." There is the condition of the goodwill, sincere, active, constant, without which the fellowship is impossible. There is the driving out of the two-fold temptation which besets us all when we try to do any good, the temptation to give in because things are difficult, the greater temptation to give up because we ourselves so often fail. There is the only possible response to the fact that God first loved us, a response which steadily makes the fact more real to us. And there is the motive, the driving-force, of our service, the joy that we to whom

*Introduction, p. viii.

so much is being given should, after all, have something to give. And all of these things we own and admit we cannot do unless He teach us. "That with gallant and high-hearted happiness we may work for Thy kingdom in the wills of men." St. Teresa claimed the hard service of herself and her daughters as a "great happiness and privilege." Can we, of whom so little in comparison is asked, claim less? The note of "joyaltie of mind" in Toc H is no mere accident. It is—in its measure—"the true Joy of Battle without which no one can be an Apostle of Christ in a high degree." Having asked that we may serve in this spirit, we own again, as at the beginning, that Toc H exists for God, for what He can make it do for Him.

Now let us look at the "method" from another angle. A very long time ago an old man wrote a book which has influenced large sections of the world for many centuries, and whose influence is yet very far indeed from being spent. He set a ball rolling which did things which he never dreamt of doing. This "ball" of his, among other things, laid much of the foundations of the education of Western Europe. But he was not thinking of that, nor even of founding, as in fact he did, a world-wide Order, which has been a school for many more. His purpose "in the tranquil simplicity of his faith," was nothing more than to establish "a little school of the Lord's service," to lay down a rule of life under which a small group of men living under the same roof might learn "to walk to God." It was a rule for all sorts of men, learned and simple, clever and dull: and it was a rule "for beginners." With the Rule itself we are not concerned; it was a rule for religious. In Toc H, as elsewhere, men think very differently of the religious life. But we are all pledged "to listen hospitably *and humbly* to Everyman's story." And if, whatever the position we start from, we listen humbly to any real story of the religious life, we will agree at least, I think, in this. It is true of Everyman, who is really and truly

trying to be a Christian, that behind all he says about it, behind his acknowledged beliefs and outward practices, there must stand a whole life of sincere and steady devotion to Our Lord. I said in January that we must not be afraid of the word "devotion" because in its true sense it is a hard and virile thing—meaning not a state of passing feeling, but a fixed continuous condition, a "belonging" permanently, and without reserve. If we all in our measure have to get *some* of this into our own lives, it is good for all of us that people—men and women and children—should be able to show in their lives what devotion can be, even if we, some of us, still doubt whether their ways of showing it are right.

But if the Rule of St. Benedict does not concern us, we may look at the Prologue, in which he sets out the outline of his method, not without hope of finding in it something to which Everyman may "incline his ear"; for Everyman is called to "walk to God." Reduced to the simplest terms, what he had to say was this. He told his handful of men—they were of all sorts and kinds --to live together as a family; the idea of the family runs all through the book. He told them to do good actively, and to do it for God. He told them to cast all guile out of their hearts, to be men of real goodwill. He told them above all to pray. And he said to them:—"If you will do these things, God's eyes will be upon you, and his ears will be open to your prayer, and before you have called upon Him you will hear Him say, Lo, here I am." I said in January that Toc H had re-captured a very old "secret." There it is. It consists of "doing these things," doing them together as a family and in a family, *and* in praying about them, praying for strength to do them. And St. Benedict was quite clear that he was inventing no new method, but only reminding men of things which had been known before, and forgotten.

The "secret" which I suggest has been re-captured obviously concerns far greater things than Toc H. It is

perhaps worth while thinking why it was given to Toc H to re-capture it. People are very odd things, and I am sure that half at least of our trouble with them (counting ourselves in, of course), is that we think them to be something quite different from what they are. Why is it that the "value" of a thing should, as some of the economists tell us, be "the measure of the sacrifice which a man who desires a thing is willing to make in order to obtain it"? (That, of course, is a statement not about things, but about the way men's minds work). Why should some of the things which are most precious to us, and most satisfying, when grasped and held, be "secret," in the sense that they are hidden, though they are meant to be found out, if we take enough trouble to find them, and take it in the right way? These questions seem to me of the same kind as the question, "Why is grass green?" It seems to be a fact, which we must take account of, that we are so made that we should not think "goodly pearls" to be "of great price," if they grew on gooseberry bushes. But—it really is an odd thing—we do not always take account of this. And here is something else that seems odd. Lots of people see the point of two simple lines in Wordsworth's, *The Poet's Epitaph* :—

But you must love him, ere to you
He will seem worthy of your love.

There is, I think, a principle behind these lines which applies to much more than Wordsworth's Poet, superficially unattractive, but truly delightful. There is a whole class of things of which we can never discover the secret or the value, until we *first* reach out after them ourselves. And the power of the soul through which we reach out after them, and find them, is love. When Talbot House, Poperinghe, when Toc H, is called "The House that Love Built," it is called so truly. For all the success Toc H has had has been won not by the way of cleverness, but by the way of love. Lots of people are seriously concerned with the various aspects of what they call "the post-adolescent problem." And sometimes they

say to us—for some critically-minded people are beginning to think that after all there must be something in Toc H—that, as we seem to be making some headway with the “post-adolescent,” we ought to be able to advise. And we can only answer, as kindly as we can, that we know nothing about it at all. We only know Bill and Tom, who belong entirely to the family, and Dick and Jack, who are members and are beginning to belong, and lots of other nice people whom we hope to get hold of by-and-by. And some of our friends think us as careless as Gallio was because we have no proper interest in their really serious problems. They do not see that we are, entirely in the spirit of learners, and with no axes of theory to grind, trying-out two things which, I rather think, were known of old time. One is that love ventures while skill is marshalling facts and figures and arguing from them: and love gets through, or else it fails, and presently is ready to try again. The other is that “Love knocks and enters: while intelligence stands without.” That sounds a little exaggerated. In fact, I think it is, and very much wiser people thought so too, ten centuries ago, when those words were written. But those much wiser people agreed entirely that in spiritual things—and “the post-adolescent problem,” among others, is a spiritual thing—love has a “power of entry,” which no other power of man has. That is why I think the method of Toc H is right.

X. HOW DOES TOC H STAND TO THE CHURCHES?

A GROUP of wild hillmen in the Nilgiris, who had been talked to for a long time by a missionary on one of the most difficult mysteries of the Christian faith, are alleged to have said :- "This makes the head buzz ; it is better to think of nothing and be at peace " We might perhaps say the same of the question at the head of this paper, but clearly we must do nothing of the sort. In this, as in other things, we must, as Toc H grows, know more and more clearly where we are going and why we do the things that we do. This question has been in my mind all the time I have been writing of Toc H, and I shall have very little to say that I have not said already.

Toc H exists, the preamble of the Charter tells us, with the purpose of "continuing in times of peace the work initiated at Talbot House, Poperinghe, in the Kingdom of Belgium, amid the dangers of the Great War, and of adjusting the methods there employed to the conditions of civil life, and, in particular"—of doing various things which need not detain us now. The other day Tubby, giving evidence in court, was asked to explain as shortly and as clearly as possible what the "work," the business, of Talbot House, Poperinghe, really was. He said it was a two-fold reconciliation, the reconciliation of man with man, and the reconciliation of man with God. Those who best knew the Old House know best how true this is. What concerns us all is that it is true of Toc H to-day. The idea of the twofold reconciliation is not fanciful in the least—nor is it new. It is based, of

course, on St. Paul's words:—"Ye are members one of another and of Christ." It is based, more deeply still, on the two Great Commandments of the Law. Toc H rests on the idea that a Christian life involves two things, which go together, a right relationship to God, and a right relationship to man. And both, on the Christian view, are relationships of an intimate character, of unity and friendship and love. If Toc H *seems* to stress one of these more than the other, that is not because it thinks it more important. It is, I think, true—and Toc H is helping to prove this—that it is very often easier for ordinary men to get into right relations with God if first of all right relations with other men are established. If a man is living in "love and joy and peace" with other men, and especially with men with whom in ordinary course he would not be living at all, it is often easier for him to find the God who, on the Christian hypothesis, *is* love and joy and peace. I have said all this before. The point to notice now is that if anything at all is the business of the Church, or the Churches, this twofold reconciliation clearly is.

What then is the warrant for Toc H as a separate society? Let me quote George MacLeod again. "The real justification for the Toc H method in Scotland is the disappearance of the Shorter Catechism as a household book. Thirty and forty years ago men were brought up with the tremendous First Question and Answer ringing in their ears. At least they knew of their duty to God; and from that there issued in many cases their duty to their fellow-men." I think that is true, but we must put it more generally, for Toc H exists out of Scotland also. The justification for Toc H—and for anything else which is trying to do the same "work"—is that the Churches have failed to hold the average man, and especially the average young man, of to-day. Or to put it at once more politely and more truthfully, Everyman has failed to hold on, in any effective and real way, to the Churches. I do not think the fact is disputed any-

where, though men differ mightily as to the reasons. The distribution of blame for the alienation of men from the Churches does not seem to me to be specially our business, or indeed the really important matter. But I do think it as useless as it is unfair to lay all the blame on the clergy, who are mostly quite ordinary people like you and me, mostly sincere and hard-working men inadequate in numbers to the task which is laid upon them, and quite often grievously over-worked. So great a result as we are considering must surely have greater causes than the failure, if it be failure, of what after all is but a handful of men. What I really think, if I must say it, is that the true idea of the church has been lost, and that with it has gone the sense of responsibility which rests on every single member of it to go out into the highways and byways and compel men to come in. There have been other ideas in other times of what sort of compulsion might be used. But we surely can think of no compulsion as permitted save that to which Our Lord Himself appealed—the compulsion of self-sacrificing love? *Are* you and I in our lives lifting him up to all men? I do not think that the Church—meaning by the Church as so often is meant nowadays, the clergy—has lost its power to instruct, those who will listen; to help to find its “secrets,” those who will search for them diligently; to help to climb the mountain, those who will try, “fulfilling the conditions imposed.” That it seems to me it does, far better than its fluent critics admit. Where it fails—and its failure cries to heaven—is in inducing people to listen, in encouraging them to begin the search, in inspiring them with the desire to climb the mountain. But is not that your fault and mine? Let us with that leave the causes of the alienation of men from the Churches alone. Let us just recognise the fact, especially as a warrant for the work we are trying to continue; and let us face another fact, which has already caused misunderstanding and difficulty.

Almost immediately Toc H became a self-governing society, its Central Executive issued the following statement:- "Toc H began among a few men who were members of the Church of England. The family has, however, always included men of other spiritual allegiances, and the Charter is proof of the breadth of its aim." It cannot be stressed too heavily that this statement was issued in support of no theory whatever. Those who authorised it, knowing that the whole of Toc H as it then was—February 1923—was behind them, were concerned merely with stating a fact. The family of Toc H had, from the beginning, been incapable, by its very nature, of being merely Anglican. The fact had only to be recognised and faced. *Perhaps*, if the Central Executive in 1923 had foreseen all the difficulties which would arise from this fact as Toc H grew, they might have decided otherwise. But I think not. I have said already that any success Toc H has won has been won not by the way of cleverness, but by the way of love. It might have been easy to foresee the difficulties which might arise from building Toc H as an "interdenominational" society, but that was not the business of the Executive in 1923. They were concerned merely with the fact that the fellowship always had included those "of other spiritual allegiances," and that it must continue to include them. We are not trying to do an amazingly difficult thing because we think it clever, and rather splendid, to attempt it; but simply because love requires it.

What love requires is often difficult, and everyone in Toc H knows the difficulties into which the inclusion in the family of men of different "spiritual allegiances" has already led us. That the trouble arose on one particular issue, and at a certain time, is really detail. It was bound to arise sometime, for whatever you or I may think on this issue or on that, no one who really knows Toc H at all *can* be indifferent to the fact that the Church—the Body of Christ—has been torn in pieces. Nor can he refrain from trying to do something which he

is convinced, or can be convinced, is practical about it. The real issue, in the actual "controversy" as it arose—and it would have been the same had controversy arisen in another way—was as to what it was "practical" for Toc H to do. The same issue arises in an immense number of cases of all sorts and all kinds. A doctor, in his everyday business, is facing it constantly. In one case, the practical thing to do may be to relieve pain. That may, unfortunately, be the *only* thing that is practicable. The doctor is there concerned with immediate results, immediate policy. In another case, it may be more practicable to concentrate on the final causes of the disease, and to work for a final solution, the recovery of the patient, even if that involves time and trouble and an immediate continuance, perhaps an increase, of pain. The doctor will do both, of course, if he can, but often, as I have said, is driven to choose the first course as the only practical one because he sees no hope in the second. But we *cannot* say this of the problem of the unity of the Churches.

When I pray with all my heart for something which I am convinced is right, I can be confident that one or other of three things will happen. Either it will become clear to me that I am mistaken. Or there will be given me the thing that I pray for, or something else which I shall recognise as the thing that I truly wanted, though I did not know it. Or I shall be given strength to go cheerfully without what I asked for. But here we cannot think of alternatives. Surely to say, or to act on the assumption, that God will not, in His own time—when men are ready for it—give to His Church "such peace and unity as are agreeable to His will" is to deny "the tranquil operation of His perpetual providence." That seems to me the real reason why Toc H, however individual members may chafe at the "barriers" which divide them, which the Churches they belong to put between them, cannot seek to further the cause of unity by adding fresh "confusions" to those which exist already. We must be patient for no less reason than that

God has to be patient with us. And we must not think that loyalty to the one Church which we all long for, and which one day men may deserve, is likely to be strengthened by the weakening of loyalties to the Churches which claim our allegiance now. But there is indeed something practical, immediately practical, which we can do. "To conquer hate would be to end the strife of all the ages; but that men should know one another is not difficult, and it is half the battle." Truly it is not difficult, *provided* men meet together as members of a Christian family. The strife and the bitterness between the followers of one Lord—surely the most hateful of all strifes and all bitterness—would they exist if men really knew one another, and really knew Him? Perhaps really to know Him is, both first and last, the most "practical" thing that we can do. We know quite well that "the morality taught by Jesus is the morality of a *person*, and not of a code," but we are so liable to think too much of other things, and too little of Him. And it is a fact—and in it, I think, lies a clue—that when people who truly love Our Lord, and on whose minds His image has begun to be graven, are talking together of Him, and thinking of Him alone, they know that, however divided they may be in their "spiritual allegiances," there is in truth no gulf between them.

My "argument" so far, has been this. The work of Toc H is essentially part of the work of the Churches. They, as organised societies, are not, in fact—I am imputing no blame—doing *all* their work. There is room for many societies which can, even in a small measure, "compel"—in the sense in which I have used the word—men to come into the family of Christ. Toc H must be as wide as Christianity, as all the Churches present it; and while as a society owing special allegiance to none of them, it must aim at making deeper and stronger, and not weaker and shallower, the loyalty of each of its members to the Churches which have a right to claim it. As regards the present divisions of the Churches, we have

turned away from controversy, not in the least because we can bear these separations lightly, because we do not care; but that we may work, and pray—which also is work—for “some greater thing” than in “this poor present” could possibly be achieved. We must wait—“he that believeth shall not make haste”—for a solution of no man’s contriving, but behind which is the Power and the Spirit of the Lord Christ. Are we not apt, in this as in other things, to forget His Power—and that He does not use men as its instruments until they will be used?

I have this more to say. I think there are two ways in which specially Toc H may try to be a unifying force. I urged in February with all the emphasis I could that Toc H must let nothing prevent its remaining a family. Why? Above all for this. Whatever we may think of the momentous series of events which we call the Reformation, we can hardly deny that something happened which no one planned to bring about, that something was lost which no one really wished to lose. We can be dominated and controlled by ideas which we do not fully understand and cannot clearly express. There was a time when the idea of the Church “as part of the personality of Christ, and as the achieving or fulfilling factor in man’s personality” dominated, in that sense, the lives of all who called themselves Christians. It was the idea of the Church as above all a family, and as a family in which, and in which alone, men can truly be the best that they can be. The idea of course survived the Reformation. But an idea which is meant to dominate becomes a feeble thing when it merely survives. “If the salt have lost its savour,—” Now the first way in which Toc H may be able to be a unifying force is by getting this idea about, that those who love Our Lord, and are trying to see Him more clearly and to follow Him more nearly, are already, across all differences, a family. Even if some of us are, as quite possibly we are, wayward and unenlightened children, the greater fact remains. And what, I think, we need

first is not the solution of this problem, or the resolving of that difference, important though those things be, but "to realise the unity of the family, and its reality and its worth." It is not for us to try to teach other people, but, if we go on learning steadily and humbly from one another, and bearing with fortitude, if we cannot bear with patience, the slowness, and what to some occasionally seems the hardness, of the organised Churches, we may find some day that we have done something that helps.

In writing* of St. Francis I spoke of a "stream" of people right through all the Christian centuries to whom their religion meant, and means, above all, a life of intimately personal devotion to Our Lord—a life of love. The point here is that this "stream" is composed of people of the most diverse kinds and the most varied views. It does not belong to any one Church or "type of Churchmanship." In several of our hymn-books will be found, almost side by side, hymns by St. Bernard of Clairvaux and hymns by Charles Wesley. I think that some of the people who sing them, contentedly enough, would be rather embarrassed if they had to think out really hard the words they sing. If they try to escape from their difficulty by suggesting that the writers did not quite intend what they say, that only shows that they do not understand. The language of lovers is always apt to be unintelligible to those who are not in love and do not know what it means. And these hymns are only intelligible as impassioned love-lyrics, and the centuries—and the other things—which separate the writers cannot disguise that the note is one. When I wrote elsewhere of how important it was that Toc H should continue to "strike the note of emotion," provided it struck the right note, I was thinking primarily of a thing to which we are all pledged, and of which I hope to write in the last of these little papers. But the point does not concern the issue we are thinking of now. "We are responsible"—I have quoted this before—"for the good we have seen and have not done." That does not mean that we are

*Appendix p. 92.

to rush in where men who are wiser and better fear to tread, or tread most warily—timidly, some of us think sometimes. But it surely does mean that *if* to you and me, to Everyman, has been given a power to help to further Christian unity, we are bound to use it. Now I dare to think that we are all meant to help, but I am sure that little people must choose the ways that are made open to them, if they will only use them. A wild idea which has come to me recently is this. One of the penalties of being really important is very often to be absorbed in immediate problems, in the things which seem to be, but are not always, the most practical things to do. Little people—who cannot hope to solve great problems, though they may, if they will, dash themselves to pieces on them—have sometimes the privilege of re-capturing great ideas, of helping them to live and to rule men's lives. Now in July I said :- “Obviously, if Our Lord's hypothesis is true, it *must* be open to Everyman to try it out for himself. There must be a way in which the most unlettered peasant and the least talented of men can reach a certainty on which he can rest as surely as Professor Jones.” And I tried to suggest that there is indeed a way, a way which is swift and sure. So here, believing that we all are privileged to help, if we will, I believe that there is a way open to us all. “Love has a power of entry, which no other power of man has.” That is perhaps the shortest way of expressing the secret of Toc H, the thing that we are learning from, and in, “The House that Love Built.” There is room obviously, in the solution of this great problem, for all the knowledge and wisdom and skill and patience and fairness of which man is capable. But the dynamic, the driving force, must, I think, be nothing less than the unselfish love of God for Himself alone. It is there now, of course, but is there enough of it? “If the coming of His kingdom seem to tarry, may it not be because we try so many ways of our own, instead of using the utmost endeavour possible to learn in prayer, not

only generally, but in detail, the way of His will? "* Do we think enough of this "problem," not as our own, but as Our Lord's, or of how He prayed:—"that they may be perfected into one; that the world may know that thou hast sent me" . . . that the love wherewith thou lovedst me may be in them?" Surely in this He has shown us firstly, the supreme *need* of a solution, and secondly, how in this we may all be "fellow-workers with him," for love is Everyman's heritage, if he will have it.

*Missionary Principles: The Place of Prayer—Oxford Mission to Calcutta.

THE FOUR POINTS OF THE COMPASS (C)

IN March and April I wrote of three of the Points of the Compass. I thought it better to leave the Fourth* to the end. It is specially fitting to discuss it in December, the month in which, year by year, behind the lighting of the Lamps of Maintenance, fires are kindled in men's hearts, and Toc H is re-dedicated. For, looked at "in the Light of the Lamp," the Fourth Point appears, not so much an essential part of the basis of Toc H, as its very life-blood. And indeed it is—for "the Gospel" we are concerned to spread is just Jesus, and for us to spread it is to help one another to know Him. This must be said right at the beginning. For—I have been trying to suggest this since January—this is one of the facts about Toc H which is definitely "given," from which we have to start. It is quite possible to argue, and much easier to act on the assumption, that the Lord Jesus Christ cannot be known, as distinctively Christian experience claims to know Him, or that He does not exist. The point at the moment is not that. It is that without Him we cannot understand what Talbot House was, or why Toc H was founded, or what it is, and is bound to be, if it continues to be itself. A question behind all the "questions" I have been asking is, *Has* Toc H a future? That in fact was the original title of these little papers; it is perhaps easier now to see why it was. The question arises because Toc H is not free. It is bound by an allegiance of the sort which, once given, cannot be broken off, except on terms we cannot bear to think of. A family which has dared to say, with heart

* "IV. *The Kingdom of God*—To spread the Gospel without preaching it."

and will behind it, that it is "God's show," must go on always trying to *become* that. Neither difficulties, nor the discouragement of its own constant failures, can give it back its freedom again. It may not decide that it has aimed too high, and must choose lower, easier ground. It is waste of time for me to say that I may cut my heart out and still go on living.

One more preliminary word. I have referred to Toc H repeatedly as a "Christianising Society." The word "Christianising" can be used with very different meanings. The following words which I quoted in July show in what sense I meant to use it. "The more we look at Our Lord, the more we shall love Him; and the more we love Him the more we shall try in every way we can to be like Him." I am not blind to the sheer "impossibility" of it; but to help men towards that is what, as I see it, Toc H is for.

I admitted in October that the Fourth Point "begged the question;" my concern is whether Toc H is helping men to find the answer. I do not forget that some of us do not find the answer easily. I know quite well that many people are so constituted, or have so constituted themselves—we are building ourselves day by day—that they will not, or cannot, take the answer solely on any sort of authority. These people, it seems, must have something, some experience, solid, unshakeable, on which they can build; something their very own and not "second-hand." I spoke in January of those who founded Toc H, or some of them, as building on indelible experience. I said too that no man who joined the family was bound, or asked, to accept on trust the "religious experience" on which it was based. But I suggested that the founders meant to try, and hoped, to pass that experience on. Can that be done, and how?

Toc H, this Fourth Point tells us, is concerned to do it (if it can be done) "without preaching." These two words have provoked criticism. It has been suggested that by using them we disparage preaching, wrongly and

rather arrogantly. We are content, most of us, just to deny that, and do not even retort that we are concerned largely with people whom preaching has failed to persuade, who are impervious to it. But some of the critics go so far as to argue as though the Gospel was to be spread solely, or mainly, by preaching. One Anglican clergyman actually said:—"I don't believe in this Point of the Compass about 'spreading the gospel without preaching it.' I am so glad that Our Lord and His Apostles were not members of Toc H." I did not argue with him; I did not even point out that Toc H is essentially a society of laymen, and preaching is normally no part of their business. And now I think it sufficient to quote another Anglican clergyman:—"Even the words of missionaries have accomplished little enough, apart from the lives behind them. Alike the spread, the maintenance and the growth within Christian countries of Christianity has been due to the persuasion of Christian lives, . . . the amazing phenomenon of lives that are different, of men who never teach and preach, it may be, by word of mouth, but who convert, simply by the beauty and power of the Spirit that is within them."* That such lives are lived, that because of them such things happen, is a fact which any open-minded person may see for himself if his eyes are open to see it. That Toc H, by its Fourth Point, should challenge its members to try to live such lives cannot, in any reasonable sense, be said to involve disparaging either preaching or those whose office it is preach. It *may* indeed be arrogant. But let us be clear on two points. One is that the challenge is to make our lives *different*, not from other people's, but from our own; from what our lives are when we order them towards our own aims, or our own standards. (When G. K. Chesterton said that "Toc H" meant "to change chaps," he referred to *us*, not to the other fellows). The other point is that—as has been said over and over again from the dawn of Christianity—"there is only one Teacher; the rest are merely instruc-

*The Rev. E. Milner White in *Essays Catholic and Critical*.

tors." *If* the words of the Fourth Point are arrogant, the enterprise to which they challenge will provide the remedy. I do not think that anyone who really tries hard enough to make his own life "*different*," "looking unto Jesus," will find he has much scope for arrogance. Here, I think, we may leave these objections, with at least a prejudice against them. *If* Toc H really is spreading the Gospel without preaching it, we must expect to find somewhere in it—not in one or two places, but in many, "the persuasion of Christ-like lives," "the amazing phenomenon of lives that are different." Whether we do find these things depends no doubt on whether they are there; but it also depends on whether we can see them. Some people do not, just as some of us do not see the things we ought to see (and no more) when we try to look through a microscope. To do that is, they tell us, "a matter of ordinary skill." To say that spiritual things must be spiritually discerned is to set up a barrier against no man who is willing to learn.

But we must go back. Toc H, I said, is trying to pass on a "religious experience." It is not doing this because it has any theories on the subject. People who have had that sort of experience, real, first-hand, unshakeable—or, if you like, who think they have had it—simply cannot help trying to pass it on, or seeking out people to whom they may communicate it. (The fact that they are quite often very indiscreet about the ways in which they try to do it only strengthens my point.) But in making this attempt Toc H, in particular, runs up against the fact—with which it is really quite specially concerned—that there is this mass of people to whom "preaching" of any sort, however camouflaged, makes no sort of appeal, whom it rather antagonises. But it also not only runs up against, but faces and deals with, another fact which is sometimes overlooked. Very many of the people to whom "conventional Christianity," or preaching of any sort, makes no appeal, are more eager than they often know to give themselves in fellowship and service. Their eager-

ness responds with alacrity to the right appeal, but it demands that the call on it should be real, should involve challenge and sacrifice and risk. When I wrote of "the method of Toc H," I tried to show how in the family this is taken as a fact, how the desire is fostered, and something of what is being built upon it. I would only add that this desire does not seem to me anything emotional, but something harder and deeper. Judging it by the results, I think it might in very many cases more aptly be described, in the phrase of an old English writer, as a "stirring," or act of the will, "springing speedily unto God as a spark from the coal." This may sound exaggerated, but when we have really grasped as a *fact* that "it is more blessed to give than to receive," we have set our feet on a road that leads higher than we know. Our lives have begun to be "different." Can we, however, make any headway while we still refuse to listen to preaching, while in the back of our minds there remains the demand that we shall have something real, first-hand, our very own, on which to build?

Let us look back to the beginning. Is it a fact really that the Gospel has ever been spread *primarily* by preaching? Where, on the day of Calvary, were the congregations of folk who had followed the great Teacher, who had sat at His feet, and heard him gladly? Did the memory of His preaching really support the Apostles through the agony of Good Friday, or the desolating fears and misery of the day that followed? What was it that beyond all expectation sent them forth on the Resurrection morning "strengthened to fight at all costs for the setting up of His Kingdom upon earth?" Surely not the sermons they had listened to, but that on that day at last they had seen Him as He really is. All there was in them had gone out in response, and they had received something of His power and His strength and His thirst for the souls of men. And presently it was said of them that "the rulers and elders saw their boldness, and, perceiving that they were ignorant and unlearned men,

marvelled; and took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus." Perhaps we miss sometimes in *some* of the preaching we listen to that note of "boldness," of tranquil assurance and joyous confidence, which made the rulers marvel. But the point is that the "boldness" of the Apostles was based on experience, direct, personal, unshakeable. That, it seems to me, is what so many men demand to-day. Some of them get it first, beyond all doubt, from the "persuasion of Christ-like lives," from "the amazing phenomenon of lives that are different"—and that is happening in Toc H, as it is happening elsewhere. These are to be envied, for the evidence is there for them to see, when they have made themselves ready to see it. But there are others who demand more, who are like—or think they are like—St. Thomas. Dare they hope that their demand will be granted?

Now the records tell us that St. Thomas was reproved, ever so gently, not that he was repulsed, or even reasoned with. All the proof he asked for was given him, so that he knew His Lord "perfectly and beyond all doubt." But this was not given him—do we always remember it?—merely because he had doubted, merely because he would not believe, without first-hand evidence for himself. It was only to the disciples that our Lord showed Himself after His resurrection. St. Thomas was the disciple who said—"Let us also go, that we may die with Him." And although, like the rest, he had failed when the crisis came, he was still a devoted and loving disciple. If you or I dare to ask to be given the sort of assurance that was given to him we must, I think, as he had, have something to offer. A friend of mine, writing the other day, protested that he could find no warrant for believing in God, though he had really and truly tried. "But," he added, "I expect if I got into trouble or difficulty I should run squealing to some nebulous being generally called "God," and ask for help." I do not think that on those lines he ought to hope to win much. St. Teresa points out somewhere the incon-

siderateness of speaking to Almighty God as if he were a slave. If we wish to learn "Our Lord's goodness by experience," we must try to be more generous. We must, I think, if we can, bring with us a record of devoted and loving service. St. Thomas had that to bring when He whom he had followed and loved was still to him just Jesus of Nazareth. If we have nothing in the past to offer, we *can* offer all the future we have. Only we must offer it meaning never to take it back. "Does God merit that we should mock Him by first giving Him this trifle and then taking it away again?" And if we offer love—have we anything to offer without it?—we must have some dim idea of what that means. "Perhaps," says St. Teresa "we do not know what love is, nor does this greatly surprise me. Love does not consist in great sweetness of devotion but in an earnest determination to strive to please God in all things, in avoiding, as far as possible, all that would offend Him, and in praying for the increase of the glory and honour of His son, and for the growth of the Catholic Church." St. Thomas' real reward, if we have time to think of it, was that he was given strength and power to fight for the Kingdom. The principle, St. Teresa, remarks dryly, that "it is more blessed to give than to receive," applies also to our dealings with Almighty God. Our chance of "success" in this venture would depend, it seems, largely on whether we have really learnt to pray for the setting up of God's will in *us*. (It would be well to remember too, if we travel on this road, how it was said that "to whom much is given, of them much shall be required." If we win through, we shall have to learn that anyhow).

I want now, at the risk of repetition, to look at what I have been trying to say from another point of view. All the year I have been seeking to provoke people to think about Toc H. The deepest conviction behind all those attempts is this. It is not enough—it might even be dangerous—to say that the Head of the family is Our

Lord Jesus Christ. We must more and more, and more and more of us, learn to *know* "whom our soul loveth." Toc H is bound, by its Charter itself, to be always "encouraging its members, through the common Christian life of the Association, to seek God, and helping them to find His will and to do it." It is not merely a family, but a family with a definite purpose, declared and avowed. I tried to suggest last month that far more may result from Toc H continuing, as it grows and spreads, to be a Christian family than from anything it can *do*. (Only, when we think of the family, we must not think merely of the "working, growing brotherhood" of those whom we know and recognise as members. Toc H does not exist for itself. We are concerned to spread the family spirit *everywhere* we can). It seems to me clear that man—if he is to be himself, the best he can be—is meant to live in a certain atmosphere, the atmosphere of "love and joy and peace" in which we pray to be taught to live together; that it is as members of a family that men learn most easily to know and see God, to find Our Lord as truly "the way, the truth, and the life." It is just in so far as Toc H is a Christian family that it is able "to spread the Gospel without preaching it." The family spirit quickens the desire, surely God-given, for unselfish service, and helps to make it fruitful. It makes vivid and compelling "the amazing phenomenon of lives that are *different*;" in the most literal sense it brings that home to us, in just the way we need. Above all, it lays so heavily on us that we cannot rest a thought which may have occurred to us before, but which has not affected us deeply—that there *must* be an adequate reason for the *difference* of those lives. When, quite plainly, we see water running up hill, we cannot be satisfied with any theory which tells us it does nothing of the sort. Our interest in "theories" about religion, or our dislike of them, may remain. But it becomes a secondary matter, when in the family we recognise the Christian life as a fact, and begin

to want, in a way we did not want before, *practical* knowledge of it. We do not, even imagine now—to use a comparison of St. Teresa's—that we can learn to play chess merely by knowing the names of the pieces. We watch other men—people perhaps we had looked down upon before—playing it. We begin to set the board ourselves and try to play—and grow more and more dissatisfied with the result. And so, without meaning it, we end by achieving for ourselves, in however imperfect a form, something like humility, which the saints seem to agree in regarding as the first, and the strongest, weapon of the Christian pilgrim. Those who know Toc H, if at all, from the outside only, must think it odd that such things should happen in it. But they do happen, constantly.

Man after man has begun in Toc H with just the happiness of the family spirit: many have begun, dully and unconvinced, with its “works,” its jobs of service. But many of these, as the life of the family has taken hold of them, have been “driven,” often reluctantly, into the greatest of all adventures, the search for God. If Toc H has taught them anything of its “secrets,” they set out now with some knowledge, however little, of what they are seeking, and some knowledge, however little, of their own unworthiness. Their motive is no longer mere curiosity, or mere desire for their own satisfaction. Whatever they want for themselves—we all want much—they also want to find *because* they want to give, and they are beginning to see how little indeed, if they find what they seek, will be all they ever can give. If Toc H has encouraged and helped any man (if I was perfectly shameless I could give you the names of many) to search for God in this spirit, it has done its job. Behind the light of the lamp has been kindled in another heart “the fire of the love of God.” And whatever difficulties and struggles lie ahead of any man to whom that has happened, it may be said to him in fullest confidence, if he will only persevere:—“Let thy heart take courage, and wait thou for the Lord.”

APPENDIX,

A NOTE ON ST. FRANCIS.

THERE is no one in ToC H, I think, who does not desire to honour St. Francis of Assisi. There are many who look back to him, rather wistfully sometimes, wondering whether he has not a message for us, and what that message is. It is right that we should try to think of that now, for surely one of the best ways of honouring a great man is to realise what we already owe to him—or what we may owe to him, if we care to learn. We must, I think, keep strictly to essentials. That is specially necessary when we are trying to learn anything from times so different to our own as the Middle Ages.

I have three things to say, and three things only. Behind the unselfish service of St. Francis, and those who followed him, was unselfish prayer, and behind that again was a great passion. The “dynamic,” the driving force, of the movement was love, the purest love of all, the love of God for Himself alone. The “rock” on which the movement was built, was repentance: the three Franciscan Orders were Orders of Penance.

I.

We must look first at the foundation on which the Franciscan “movement” immediately rested. I think it is true to say that right through the Christian centuries to the present day there has been a “stream” of people to whom their religion has meant—often it has meant much more—a life of intimately personal devotion to our Lord, or, more bluntly, a life of love. Sometimes the “stream” has been a mere trickle, sometimes a mighty river. Now in the twelfth century there was an “outbreak” of personal piety typified by St. Bernard, and Father Cuthbert, one of whose books* I have quoted

*The Romanticism of St. Francis.

already, has this to say of it:—"Twelfth century piety expended itself in contemplation, quickened by humility, of Our Lord's person as the desired of Heart; to know that Christ lived was its supreme joy; to live in His presence, its cherished delight. Humility was its dominant note. . . . In humility, in loving humility, Our Lord came to us; in loving humility we shall attain to Him." This piety tended to be what some people—not always wisely, I think—call self-regarding. It certainly tended to be sequestered, remote from most of the things which interest most of us. Many people would see no sort of connection between it and their ideas of St. Francis. But Father Cuthbert says expressly that "this twelfth century piety entered into Franciscan life, and was essentially bound up with its spirit." St. Francis, and his followers, did not turn away from this intimately personal, passionate devotion—as so many tend to do to-day—as a thing which a stricken world did not really need. They kept it, as the driving force of all they did; but they added to it something more. To them Our Lord was indeed "the Hope of the Soul that sighed for Him." "He was also in a far wider sense the Hope of all the world. He was not only 'My King,' He was the 'Lord of the Earth.' In the very fullest sense therefore the Franciscan saw the whole visible world as the kingdom of the God-man, and the Christ called to him not only as the Crown of all perfection but as 'the Divine Sharer in the world's burdens.'" Many in *Toc H*, as I have said, are beginning to look to St. Francis for inspiration, to hold up to themselves as an ideal the Franciscan spirit of unselfish service. But when we think of that we must remember the fire in which that spirit was kindled, by which it was fed. The most amazing thing about St. Francis was not the work he did, but the way in which "he conformed his life to that of his Lord and Master." So the first thing, I think, that St. Francis has to teach us in *Toc H* is that behind and in his "unselfish service" was utterly unselfish prayer, and

behind and in his prayer was a great passion. We must not be afraid of this;* we must not be afraid of continuing to "strike the note of emotion," a note which Toc H undoubtedly struck when it began. But we must see to it that we strike the right note, *and* we must remember one of the truest things that has ever been said—that a great passion needs a great discipline.

II.

An unknown writer in the "Scotsman" said the other day that the dynamic, the driving-force, of Toc H is the power and the spirit of Christ manifesting itself in militant social service. We must not be content to think placidly that this may be true. We must strenuously try to make it come true; and here also, I think, St. Francis can help us. Father Cuthbert tells us that the truth at which St. Francis arrived in the process of his conversion was this. "Through . . . self-seeking man had put himself out of right relationship with the world and with God; in his lust of the earth as his own possession,

*Talking at a Conference in Oxford the other day, I said something like this:—"One of our members, the present Bishop of Ripon, speaking to our Bristol Conference in 1924, pointed out that the linking of Toc H with the War, and the fact "that it did not shrink from striking the note of emotion," gave it, at the start, a great driving force. The Lamp of Maintenance was, he said, the symbol of a very real and a very deep emotion. He seemed to see in this a possible danger to Toc H as interest in the War faded away. Now I think that most people who were present at the Guildhall in 1922 when the first Lamps were lit, and also at the Masque at the Albert Hall last December, would agree that the response to the symbolism of the Lamps has grown deeper, and not shallower. But there are members of Toc H who not only share the fear which the Bishop of Ripon voiced in 1924, but distrust "the note of emotion" which runs through Toc H. My own conviction is that this "note of emotion" is an essential part of its heritage, and must on no account be lost." I promised at the time to try to explain later why I hold this opinion. The simplest way of doing this seems to me just to link it with what I am trying to say now.

subject to his own will, man had really put himself into opposition to the larger life about him; . . . in his lust of dominion (he) had closed against himself the heart of the world, and so had become a veritable stranger to the deeper spiritual life of things, and to the life of God which is revealed in the world's spiritual life. To regain one's proper fellowship with the world, and so to find one's own true life, this lust of dominion must be cast out, and a man must come to the world's life in loving dependence upon it as drawing upon its bounty." St. Francis clearly held that, although the world he lived in was to him as unlovely as ours is to many of us, man was not to wait till the world had been set in order before taking up the right attitude towards it. He was to take up the right attitude *first*. Service is more than "the rent we pay for our room on earth"—it is indeed more in very many cases now in Toc H. The *motive* of our service is the truly important thing. It must be the same as the motive of our thanksgiving, and that—as Abbot De Latte, whom I quoted in March, puts it—must simply be that "God loves to be thanked." I think St. Francis would tell us first that we must learn to love the world Our Lord is redeeming before we can hope to serve it rightly, whether in "militant social service" or in other ways. I think he would tell those of us who long to see service substituted for profit-making as the dominant motive in industry that we must first make service, loving service, the dominating motive in our lives. I think he would smile, a little sadly but encouragingly, at those of us who say this is too difficult, for I fancy he would agree with Abbot De Latte, who says:—"Although no one can at his pleasure have literary genius or add an inch to his stature, in the moral order we may win any power or any stature that we desire." He would say too, I feel sure, that we need not concern ourselves unduly about results, or even about the particular things that we do, agreeing again with the Abbot, that "from the day that we love nothing apart

from God, or more than God, we become in His hand a power which he can wield, a force which he can utilise as He wills." "In its ultimate form," says Father Cuthbert again, "Franciscan piety sought to identify itself with Our Lord in His work for the world's restoration." If that is really what we are going to try to aim at, results are not primarily our concern. What we can all have is "the joy of working after Him, and with Him, and of spending our efforts where He spent His blood." The permanent "note of emotion" in Toc H is summed up for me in the words, "love, and joy and peace" in the prayer which I discuss elsewhere.* But the "love, and joy and peace" of Toc H must be, or must become, intensely virile and dynamic things. "When the disagreement with God, with our brethren, and with ourselves has ceased, and this much is finally won and settled, *then* we have peace Peace is not sloth, nor a false lack of interest; it is the attitude spontaneously assumed by the soul when it is united to God by love." Peace, like joy, is not exactly a virtue; but it is "the fruit of the highest virtues, for it is the daughter of love." The dynamic of Toc H is, or ought to be, the power and spirit of Christ." That power, that spirit, is love. None of us can see all the treasures of Our Lord's personality; far less can we hope to show in our lives all the little that we can see. It is not for us to deny, or to make light of, other people's interpretations, or their attempts to show in their lives what they have seen of Him. It is enough that through all we do we should try to let Him shine as we are beginning to see Him, as Love that was always giving, that was strenuous and active, seeking indeed rest and quiet sometimes, but only to go out again strengthened and refreshed to work anew.

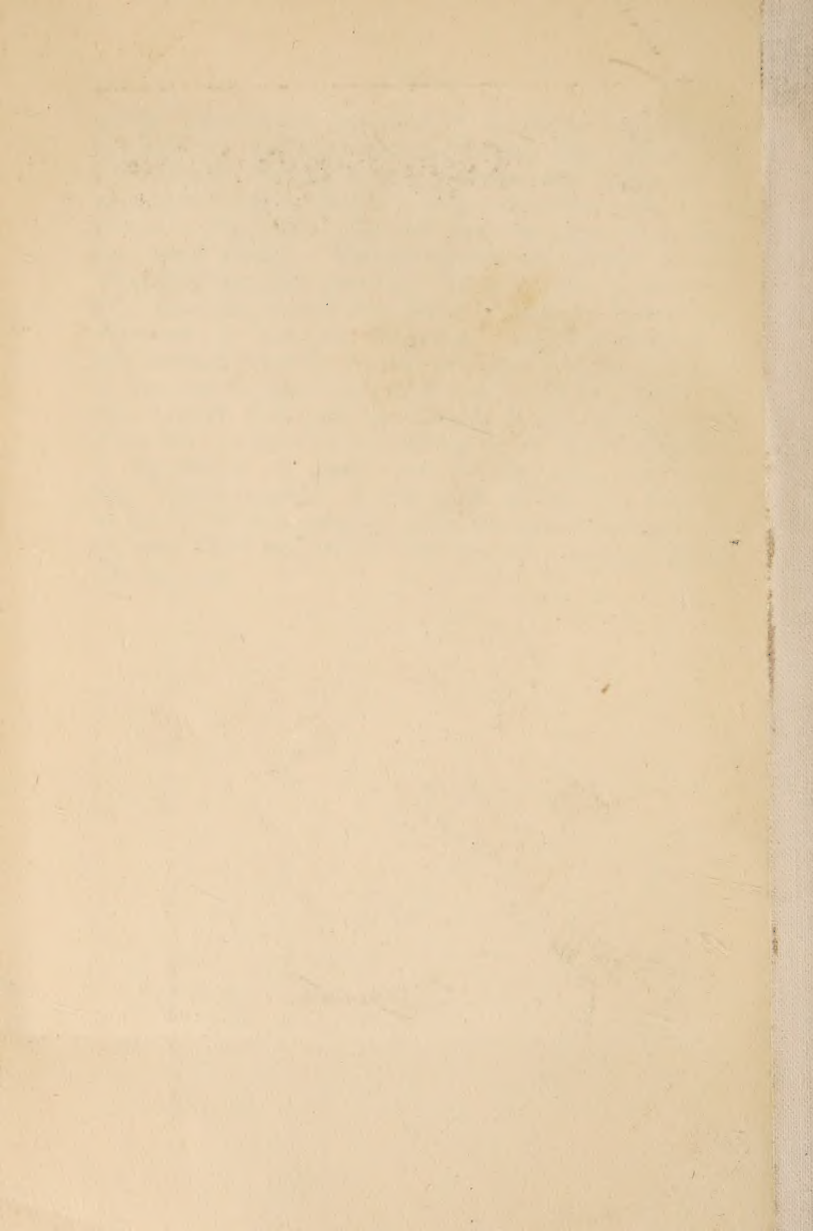
III.

But if we are to look to St. Francis for inspiration, there is one thing more which cannot be passed by. I

* Introduction, p. viii.

had better let Father Cuthbert state it: "St. Francis started life with an instinctive belief that the world was good to live in. . . . His religious conversion was brought about through his awakening to the fact that the world was at war with itself and out of harmony with his native instinct; his early idealism failed him. . . . In his pity for the leper a new light dawned on his soul and he saw the world bathed in the tender radiance of the Divine Love, and Jesus Christ battling in His pity to restore the earth; and so his idealism rose up again, renewed, but with a difference. He had now become conscious of the value in suffering and poverty. The begging leper stood before him as a symbol of the world as it is afflicted and burdened through the sin of man, yet comforted and enobled by the redeeming love of Our Lord. The sense of sin, which is the beginning of true religious conversion, now entered into his conscious view of the world, and sin was self-seeking, the worship of self." Of the Three Franciscan Orders we ordinary folk are concerned, I think, with the Third Order, which St. Francis designed, as G. K. Chesterton puts it, to assist ordinary men and women to be ordinary with an extraordinary exultation. "It has," he says, "been an inspiration to innumerable crowds of ordinary men and women; living lives like our own, only entirely different. The morning glory which St. Francis spread over the earth and sky has lingered as a secret sunshine under a multitude of roofs and in a multitude of rooms." The glamour of that appeals, I know, to many of us. But the Little Manual of the Third Order begins with this bald statement. "About the year 1219, St. Francis, of Assisi, went through Tuscany, preaching everywhere and inviting sinners to repentance." The original Rule of the Third Order began:—"Here beginneth the Rule of the Brothers and Sisters of the Order of Penance"; and it is for the habit of the Third Order of Penance that the postulant asks to-day. The way in which, not St. Francis only, but many other people of whom otherwise men would

gladly learn, stress the sense of sin as the beginning of spiritual life, and repentance as the key that unlocks the fountains of spiritual energy, irritates and repels, as it always has done. But it is useless to argue with these people. If you do, they only say over again what they have said already. Fortunately we can always try-out what they say, and prove it. To prove the power that true, unselfish, repentance gives is open to Everyman, whatever his "spiritual allegiance." And the most insistent message that St. Francis of Assisi, has for you and for me, and for the whole family of ToC H as a family, is just, I think, this hard, unpalatable, inspiring thing, that if we are "to fight for the setting up of God's Kingdom in the hearts of men," and of our own—we must first "listen humbly" to the words of John the Baptist, which St. Francis preached again through Tuscany about the year 1219, and which were the foundation of all he did, and was.



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